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Inter-Arab Affairs

Interior Ministers Council Holds 10th Session

Egyptian, Sudanese Envoys Meet

NC0401113493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1023 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Tunis, 4 Jan (MENA)—Egyptian Interior Minister Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa met today with Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, Sudanese deputy prime minister and interior minister, who is chairing the meetings of the 10th session of the Arab Interior Ministers Council.

During the meeting, they discussed Arab security issues and Egyptian-Sudanese relations. The two men emphasized their concern for the close historical relations between the two fraternal peoples and the importance of removing anything that might mar these relations.

Algeria's Hardi Attends Meeting

[All quotation marks as received]

LD0401112693 Algiers APS in English 1025 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Tunis, Jan 4 (APS)—"By its participation in the 10th session of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers, Algeria intends to recover its place on the international scene", said minister of interior and local collectivities, Mohamed Hardi, who arrived Sunday here at the head of an Algerian delegation to attend the Arab Ministerial Council. In an interview to APS, Hardi said "the period of reflux has ended". Algeria, he underlined, is determined to make its voice heard in international forums, particularly those that are close to it at the civilizational, cultural, political and security levels". During this 10th session, the Arab interior ministers will debate mainly questions related to security in the Arab world, said Hardi. Algeria succeeded in reducing opposition beds, said the minister who expressed satisfaction about the fact that "Algeria's immunity system, which originates from its revolution, enabled it to get out of a nefarious plot and dangerous actions, but we are concerned about other Arab countries that have not yet witnessed this type of problems", he said.

"Those who think that what is happening in Algeria and Egypt and to a lesser degree in Tunisia, are [word indistinct] problems, are wrong", said Hardi who added that "these are only battles that are waged in the frame of an international plot aimed at the Moslem world as a whole and particularly the Arab world". Dealing with aggressions faced particularly by Algeria and Egypt, Hardi insisted on the fact that these two countries constitute, given the political and geostrategic importance they occupy, constitute the key of the Maghreb and the Mashreq. In this context, he warned the other countries which think they are protected from danger". If these two strongholds fall, he said, "the Arab world will sooner or later collapse".

Concerning the inter-Arab cooperation that will be established to overcome the plot, Hardi said the problem the Arab world is facing is positive. If we consider that this plot is waged against the Arab world with lesser degrees and with different methods and in various periods, it is high time to act and adopt a common strategy of struggle". In this context, the minister said that "in a number of Arab countries, confrontation exists. This is the case of Jordan which is very exposed and Saudi Arabia. According to news coming from Saudi Arabia, said Hardi, activism in mosques took such an importance that the first official of this country, King Fahd took position. It is a sign that gangrene has reached the social tissue of this country, said the minister adding that Saudi Arabia is, may be the most targeted country in the Arab world. As, explained Hardi, the plot is built around Islam and the final objective is but the accaparation [as received] of the control of the holy places. This will reinforce the final victory of fundamentalists and give them a colossal means of pressure on the Arab world", concluded Hardi.

Council Session Opens 4 Jan

LD0401145293 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] The 10th session of the Arab Interior Ministers' Council opened this morning in Tunis. Abdalllah Kallel, [Tunisian] minister of state and minister of interior delivered [Tunisian] President Zine el Abidine Ben Ali's speech welcoming the Arab interior ministers. [passage omitted]

The Tunisian president added that Tunisia, which is deep-rooted in its Arab-Islamic environment and which believes in the common destiny of Arab sister countries, will constantly remain an effective element in the security effort with the aim of safeguarding the security of our countries, their sovereignty and strength.

President Ben Ali said: Our Arab countries are confronting a number of challenges at the present time, the most important of which may be all-round development. This bet must be won because our peoples are looking forward to a secure tomorrow and a better future, and also in order to realize the aspirations of the entire Arab nation and to catch up with advanced states. [passage omitted]

His excellency the president also commented the phenomenon of religious fanaticism, about which he said it represents a serious threat to the Arab-Islamic nation. It seeks to undermine the stability of our countries, the security of our societies and the advancement of our peoples. The time has come to distinguish between evolving a true Arab-Islamic identity, which is desired by the new era-Tunisia, and all that enhances the faith and religious instruction. [sentence as heard]

The head of state called for intensifying Arab cooperation with the aim of realizing the means which ensure the safety of the Arab states and safeguard their security against various attacks. The latest of these is the act of the Israeli authorities in expelling an important number of brother Palestinians from their occupied territories—an act considered to be a violation of fundamental human rights and a flagrant breach of all international charters and a serious escalation that could undermine the peace process. [passage omitted]

Egypt, Libya Discuss Security

NC0401162593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1450 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Tunis, 4 Jan (MENA)—[Egyptian] Interior Minister Major General 'Abd-al-Halim Musa met with Libyan Interior Minister [title as received] Ibrahim Bakkar on the sidelines of the 10th session of the Arab interior ministers conference, which opened here today. The two officials discussed ways to strengthen Libyan-Egyptian cooperation and coordination in various security-related fields.

Egyptian Minister Addresses Meeting

NC0401164693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1345 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Tunis, 4 Jan (MENA)—Egyptian Interior Minister 'Abd-al-Halim Musa has called on the Arab interior ministers conference to work out a unified Arab strategy to address the terrorism problem. Musa said that the Arab world has an urgent mission to formulate and agree on a strategy that will not only protect the Arab countries from this danger but also protect Islam from those who claim they belong to it and defame it with crimes of murder and destruction.

In a speech at the first working session of the Arab Interior Ministers Council this afternoon, Musa stressed that a strategy is needed that defines the lines between Islam's call inviting all that is good and forbidding what is wrong, on one hand, and killing innocent people, stealing, destroying, and fomenting divisions on the other. The latter examples unquestionably violate Islamic teachings.

Musa said that terrorists currently seem to focus their activities in certain countries while other countries remain free of the phenomenon, adding, however, that this is merely an illusion: We are all in the same boat and will be threatened by this danger sooner or later, he added. He noted that the danger of terrorists lies not in the arms they carry or the crimes they commit but in the mask behind which they hide. Behind a veneer of zeal for Islam, they seek to attract supporters and sympathy, portraying the forces that confront them as fighting against God's religion and teachings.

Musa stressed that Islam is not guns, bombs, murder, destruction, violence, or coercion; Islam is a call for God through wisdom and kind preaching. He stressed that mosques are places of worship and praying, not forums for slander or dens for hatching plots.

Musa said that the deceptive mask behind which terrorists hide will fall and their evil intentions will be revealed. We will draw the line between righteousness, which we support, and fabrication, which we combat, when we enhance the concept of true Islam and the mosque's role in the heart of every Muslim. Musa said that when we look at the current situation of the Arab nation we see different positions and trends. However, those who look beyond the appearance realize that the bonds of fraternity and unity are stronger than the division and disunity. He stressed that the Arab interior ministers' initiative to hold this annual meeting demonstrates that the Arab nation understands the challenges confronting domestic security in the Arab world.

Libyan Delegate Bemoans Sanctions

LD0501140493 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0930 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Tunis, 5 Jan (JANA)—In his speech at the opening of the 10th session of the conference of Arab interior ministers, which began in Tunis yesterday, Ibrahim Bakkar, [Libyan] secretary of the General People's Committee for Justice and Public Security, said the UN Security Council is still very distant from the real legal position in tackling the crisis which has been going on between the Great Jamahiriyah and the Western powers, despite the positive stances and the civilized attitude adopted by the Great Jamahiriyah to solve the crisis.

In his speech, brother Bakkar said: Just imagine the enormity of the crime to which your Arab people in Libya are exposed as a result of extending UN Security Council Resolution 748. Think also of the great harm done by its embargo on equipment, the banning of air flights, spare parts, and maintenance. In addition, the air embargo means that we are short of medicines and cannot send sick and ill people abroad for treatment.

Algeria's Hardi on Arab Security

LD0501120993 Algiers APS in English 1016 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Tunis, 5/01/92 (APS)—The Home and Local Collectivities Minister, Mohamed Hardi delivered on Monday a speech before members of the Council of Arab Ministers [who] met in Tunis in the frame of their 10th session. The intervention of the minister was centered on a series of interrogations to which he answered, concerning notably the way to deal with the different aspects of the security problem facing some Arab countries.

If the field of security in the Arab countries, Hardi pointed out, witnessed huge efforts, it worth reinforcing, the danger [word indistinct] more and more in the phenomenon of terrorism. We have to define, Hardi said, the target of this phenomenon, "does it aim at certain countries of the Arab world or the Arab countries?"

"Danger threatens the whole Arab nation since terrorism is the result of a plan aiming at our entity", adding that "Islam was utilized for the place it occupies in the Arab world and its impact on our peoples".

On another turn, Hardi pointed out that Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt were chosen for their geostrategic situation as well as for the problems they are facing due to the demographic growth and the economic difficulties. The home and local collectivities minister called further to draw the [words indistinct] "to avoid to fall into the trap".

Regarding Algeria, Hardi noted that "in spite of the difficult situation and its effects, Algeria knew how to control the situation". He also called for engaging "a serious reflexion for the elaboration of (?a global) plan of struggle against terrorism, its causes and factors which gave birth to it", noting that the main causes rest in the disequilibrium of growth between the Arab countries and within others.

Concerning this last point, Hardi stressed that "the disequilibrium of growth within certain Arab countries is the breach through which our enemies penetrate to sow discord". These enemies, he added, aim at "the most deprived social strata which suffer from multiple problems to the point to lose hope".

"It is imperative to make these social strata go out of the precarious situation they are living through, if we want to ensure the future of our countries", the Algerian minister stressed. Hardi emphasized "the close relations existing between the difficult situation of these categories in certain Arab countries and the future of security in the Arab world, because, he said, this latter cannot resist, if certain of these countries are victim of the plot".

"It proves that protecting these countries from the danger threatening them, is also to protect all the Arab countries", he noted, before stressing "the necessity to take into account these data in the elaboration of the Arab security".

Iraqi Minister Addresses Meeting

JN0501130993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1125 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Tunis, 5 Jan (INA)—Iraq has emphasized that it is eager to follow ideal channels of cooperation with fellow Arabs to advance Arab interests.

Addressing the 10th round of the Arab interior ministers' council in Tunis today, Iraqi Justice Minister Shabib al-Maliki added: The oppressive embargo imposed by the aggressors will never weaken the resolve and firmness of the Iraqi people. Neither will it deflect them from their pan-Arab obligation to defend major Arab issues, above all the Palestinian people's cause—not before the establishment of a Palestinian state led by the PLO.

He said the Arabs must be alert to a systematic plan of foreign infiltration of the Arab homeland, putting at risk the Arab nation and the threads holding it together.

Al-Maliki indicated that this danger lately reared its head as an open challenge to the will of the Arab nation, and cited the U.S.-Western-Zionist aggression against Iraq in a bid to wipe out its infrastructure. The minister also noted that Iraq is under siege, with its people being denied food and medicines. He also cited the air ban on Libya, and the [Iranian] occupation of three United Arab Emirates' islands.

Al-Maliki urged the adoption of a determined stand against this formidable challenge, and called for every possible support and care to be extended to Palestinians across the Arab world.

Increased cooperation and solidarity among the Arab states, he asserted, is certain to safeguard their sovereignty and solidify the pillars of justice and security in Arab societies.

The 10th round of the Arab interior ministers' council began here yesterday, 4 January, and will last three days.

Topics on Meeting Agenda Noted

LD0501155193 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] The 10th session of the Arab interior ministers conference continues in Tunis. The session began work yesterday.

The agenda of the session includes discussion of an Arab security plan for the next five years; implementation of the interim strategic Arab plan to combat the illegal use of drugs; and the problems of extremism and terrorism, which threaten the security and the stability of the Arab nation.

Council Session Issues Statement

LD0501202793 Riyadh SPA in English 1941 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Tunis, Jan 5, SPA—The Arab Interior Ministers Council on Tuesday issued a communique at the end of its tenth session confirming the importance of inter-Arab coordination to confront such destructive activities as foreign infiltration into the Arab world and attempts to instigate terrorism, violence and sabotage.

The communique said the council has approved reports by the secretary general on the activities of and studies prepared by the General Secretariat, as well as a report by Saudi Interior Minister Prince Naif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the president of the previous session, honorary president of the council and chairman of the board of the Arab Center for Security Studies and

Training, on the works of the center in the period between the convening of the ninth and tenth sessions of the council.

Prince Naif's report included a list of studies and researches on security prepared by the center over the past year, to upgrade the performance of Arab security authorities' personnel.

The council approved the second five-year Arab security plan, which is described as comprehensive and keeping abreast with Arab and international changes and developments.

It approved the recommendations of conferences and meetings held within the context of the general secretariat during the year 1992.

The council issued resolutions pertaining to fighting narcotics including the implementation of a planned Arab strategy on drug abuse and the illegal dealings in drugs.

The council approved a project proposed by Egypt to set up a an Arab Security Information Bureau based in Cairo to boost cooperation and coordination among member states.

Iraqi Envoy on 'Missing' Kuwaitis

JN0601115193 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1115 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Tunis, 6 Jan (INA)—Iraqi Justice Minister Shabib al-Maliki has briefed the Arab Interior Ministers Council on the facts related to the Kuwaiti persons present in Iraq.

In an interposition during the meetings of the Council's 10th session, which concluded here last night, al-Maliki said that [Kuwaiti Amir] Jabir's clique has fabricated the groundless issue of the missing or detained persons for political, not humanitarian, ends and to provide excuses for Washington and its allies to maintain the blockade against Iraq.

The minister told the INA correspondent in Tunis that the Iraqi delegation has given the Arab interior ministers a memorandum on the subject which included figures, statistics, and proven documents. The document, he said, reveals that the authorities in Kuwait refuse to return the Kuwaitis currently present in Iraq and confirms that there are no persons missing or detained by the Iraqi authorities.

Shabib al-Maliki pointed out that the Arab interior ministers rejected a request by Jabir's delegation to discuss the issue of the so-called Kuwaiti missing persons and said the Council was satisfied with the explanations of the matter as contained in the Iraqi delegation's memorandum. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Discusses Fatah Movement, Peace Talks

NC0401110093 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 4 Jan 93 pp 17-21

[Interview with Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat by Muhammad Sadiq al-Husayni in Tunis; date not given]

[Text] [Al-Husayni] Mr. Yasir 'Arafat, president of the state of Palestine. Some 25 years have passed since the start of your Fatah Movement, which adopted armed struggle as its basic course of action for liberation. Don't you feel that the reasons for its existence or continuance are not valid anymore and that it should be dissolved because you are now following a new course toward the state and giving priority to diplomatic action?

['Arafat] May God forgive you. May God forgive you for this question. Before anything else, I must reply that liberation movements do not disband themselves even when they attain their primary and principal objective. They only start focusing on new objectives, such as moving from the minor jihad to the greater jihad. God's prophet, may God's prayers and peace be with him, was asked what is the greater jihad and he replied: The jihad of the soul. Khomeyni's revolution did not dissolve itself when it returned to the homeland nor did the liberation movements in Algeria, Congo, Ghana, or the Vietnamese movement when the south was liberated. For example, the Algerian Liberation Front formed the Liberation Party. Yasir 'Arafat today, while on the threshold of confronting the tasks of the state, will not dissolve either the PLO or the Fatah Movement. On the contrary, 'Arafat is feeling the increasing responsibilities and burdens of the coming state. In the new stage waiting for us, educating the people, strengthening the homeland's defenses, and protecting its political, economic, intellectual, and cultural independence will become the revolution's main tasks. Do not forget that the enemy has destroyed the economic, social, health, and educational infrastructures throughout the period of occupation and restoring them will require superhuman efforts.

[Al-Husayni] Does Abu-'Ammar ['Arafat] believe that he has fulfilled the Palestinian people's dreams now that he has reached this new stage?

['Arafat] So far no, but we are on our way. We can proudly say that we have restored the Palestinian people to the Middle East map. In 1952, that is, after the 1948 disaster, UN Secretary General Trigve Lee deleted the Palestinian issue from the UN agenda and turned it into a mere file with one of the UN organizations. He thus turned the cause from one of a people into refugees figures. They believed then that time will see to the demise of this people, as was the case with many other peoples, such as the red Indians and other people who were doomed to extinction.

This picture changed completely when I stood at the UN rostrum in 1974 to speak on behalf of this Palestinian people, thus overcoming all the obstacles, impediments, and difficulties that prevented Palestine from taking its place among nations. The picture became clearer when the whole UN organization moved to Geneva in 1988 when U.S. authorities banned me from entering the United States. I announced the Palestinian peace initiative from Geneva. The same thing happened again when the Security Council moved to Geneva. The issue of Palestine thus became issue number one in the United Nations despite the importance of other issues that passed through it before, after, and during the presentation of our cause. There is now a world day for Palestine, 19 November. Palestine is now an observer member of the United Nations. Pay attention to this: Palestine and not the PLO, just like Switzerland and the Vatican.

[Al-Husayni] Some say, however, that these are only symbolic achievements, as the international community has not yet recognized Palestine's geopolitical unity.

['Arafat] Some 127 countries recognize the state of Palestine, which is now under occupation. It is true that Palestine's geopolitical unity is incomplete, but it is also true that the political identity of the Palestinian people has been restored, thanks to long struggle and jihad. Those who exist politically will inevitably exist on the geographic map sooner or later.

[Al-Husayni] What are you negotiating on with the Israelis?

['Arafat] The land.

[Al-Husayni] In your statement to YEDI'OT AHARONOT a few days ago, you said you consider the settlement a principle, not a policy. What did you mean?

['Arafat] I said peace, not a settlement, is a principle. I would like to emphasize this again pursuant to God's words in the blessed Koran: "If the enemy inclines toward peace, do thou also incline toward peace and trust in God."

[Al-Husayni] Peace with whom? The enemy?

['Arafat] Yes, with the enemy. Prophet Muhammad, may God's peace and prayers be upon him, established peace with his enemies, with the tribe of Quraysh.

[Al-Husayni] But in your case, the other side is not at all serious about peace; it is only maneuvering and buying time?

['Arafat] But at least it is sitting opposite the Palestinian delegation in Madrid. It is true that it is procrastinating, but it officially says it wants peace. As for us, we did not and will not surrender to time and maneuvers. We fight and negotiate at the same time. By the way, we are the only Arab side that negotiates and fights at the same time. The blessed intifadah, which these days is entering its sixth year as the longest popular uprising in the modern age, is the best example.

[Al-Husayni] Can the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, which are supervised and led by Yasir 'Arafat in Tunis, be considered a kind of tactic on the part of the Palestinian leadership?

['Arafat] No. This is not a tactic. This is one of the fields of action and struggle. We are waging our political battle as we are waging our media, diplomatic, and intifadah battles. Negotiations with the enemy are no less vicious than any military operation carried out by our mujahidin and revolutionaries.

[Al-Husayni] But the negotiations battle you are talking about has no prospects and its results, if there will be any, are limited.

['Arafat] Yes, I know this, and I repeated it many times. I am honest with my people, who are my only asset. I have no oil, nor do I own any asset other than the masses and confidence of my people, but can you tell me of any revolution or liberation movement that did not end up negotiating with its enemies? Give me a single African state that won independence without sitting with its enemy to agree on independence—from the first and second Evian treaties on Algeria, to Samora Machel's agreements with Portugal, to Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Namibia.

[Al-Husayni] But the Palestine question is unlike any other one; it is the cause of the entire nation—this is at least what we have been raised to learn. The historical comparison you made, when you mentioned the prophet's peace with Quraysh, disregards the fact that peace was followed by the conquest of Mecca. Are you at the threshold of a similar conquest, for instance?

['Arafat] I told you: "If the enemy inclines toward peace, do thou also incline toward peace and trust in God," but I also know that this verse is preceded by: "Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the hearts of the enemies of God and your enemies, and others besides, whom you may not know, but whom God doth know." This obviously means that our options are open. We have not closed any of our options, which include jihad.

[Al-Husayni] Has armed struggle become one of several options, after it used to be the primary option?

['Arafat] Yes, armed struggle is one of our options. Our options are many and include the intifadah and resistance. Do you remember how some people objected when I went to represent Palestine at the United Nations in 1974?

[Al-Husayni] The intifadah, however, is armed struggle and a total revolution.

['Arafat] The intifadah's most notable aspect is that it is a revolution of the masses, in contrast with the former fedayeen activities of a struggler elite. This is a great achievement in which we take pride. It is what we used to aim for night and day when we were still in the stage of the revolution of the struggler elite.

[Al-Husayni] If you have reached the stage of general mobilization, why is the Palestinian negotiator's image the only prominent one? Is this contradiction one of the options of a leadership that is trying not to bring to the fore numerous other images because it is involved in the negotiations option?

['Arafat] No, no, this is not my option at all. It is the option of the sensationalist newspapers, those who have no real presence on the Palestine scene, and those who try to cover up their impotence vis-a-vis the intifadah's alliance with the diplomatic and negotiations battle. Two weeks ago, the enemy's chief of staff, Yehuda Barak, was asked if the intifadah had stopped. He said the rock-throwing had eased but the bullets were on the rise. Who is firing the bullets? Was not the struggler 'Abir, a fourth year engineering student, a Fatah member and commander of the West Bank's central sector, the one who was recently arrested while opening fire?

[Al-Husayni] Every observer of the Palestinian scene is getting the impression that there is a consensus to reject a settlement as a basic choice, even in the ranks of the Fatah Movement, which you lead.

['Arafat] Who said that a settlement is our only choice. Even the Palestine National Council [PNC] did not say this. This is the secret of our strength. As I told you, we are the only delegation that is negotiating and resisting.

[Al-Husayni] How much opposition to your policy is there inside the Fatah Movement? Does the opposition have practical options?

['Arafat] We are democratic. The majority rules both inside Fatah and the PNC. As you know, democracy in a revolution is the most difficult type of democracy. It is rifle jungle democracy. Opposition choices are permitted on condition that they not be subservient to or directed by foreign parties. We fought for an independent Palestinian decision. It is Fatah's basic original slogan: "not to be subservient to or directed by anything except the will of the Palestinian masses."

[Al-Husayni] What is Abu-'Ammar's attitude toward the 10 Palestinian factions who oppose your policy?

['Arafat] You mean the two and one-half organizations. I call them fractions, not the 10 organizations.

[Al-Husayni] Nevertheless, some of them have a basic and popular influence within the Islamic stream like Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. What is Abu-'Ammar's opinion of this stream?

['Arafat] I had wished that the Islamists would not allow the enemy to manipulate us by sowing sedition. Regrettably, through such sedition crimes were perpetrated against the people in the occupied territories, particularly our Christian brothers.

[Al-Husayni] You are being blamed for threatening to fight them with gunfire. You were quoted as saying that Hamas is playing a role similar to the one played by the Zulu tribes against Mandela.

['Arafat] No, this is a shameful lie. No one has ever known me to open fire on anyone except the enemy. I will not allow any of my supporters to open fire on anyone except the Zionist enemy. Yes, I said that those Palestinians who open fire on our people in the West Bank and Gaza are playing the same role as Inkatha, the Zulu tribes that oppose Mandela's program versus de Klerk. However, I do not believe that it is possible to sow divisions among us in Palestine, because we are confronting an obvious national and religious enemy. We do not need disagreements and divisions to set us apart. We need to end the era of occupation—the dirtiest occupation in history—and expel the enemy from our land.

[Al-Husayni] But there are people who say that you have gone too far in appeasing the enemy and that, perhaps, you are heading toward signing something quite serious?

['Arafat] I can tell you frankly and you may convey it to anyone you like. There is absolutely nobody among us who will cede one single iota of soil of the holy land or its stones. It will be improper for us to differ now. Do we want to divide the prey before we catch it? We are all under the yoke of occupation, and it is the dirtiest occupation in history, as I told you.

In South Africa, they found de Klerk to talk to, but I cannot find somebody, even like de Klerk, to negotiate with. We have thousands of prisoners like Mandela held in occupation prisons, including my brother Hamas commander in Gaza, Shaykh Ahmad Yasin. We need a national comprehensive unity. Let me ask this question: Why was the PLO attacked when it joined the peace talks while others are not? Are the Arabs not going with me to the same negotiations table? Why am I, the Palestinian, attacked?

Is it not my right to find a ground on which I can stand? Why were not Amman, Damascus, and Beirut or anyone who is taking part in the peace process not attacked? I am going to the peace process with nothing to offer. I am going to take a land that would harbor the Palestinians in diaspora whose wounds are bleeding.

[Al-Husayni] Have your theories, which stress the need for penetrating Israeli society, achieved anything?

['Arafat] Yes. We have managed to gain much among this society's sections, which formed the Peace Now Movement. This movement is currently forcing Rabin to revoke the restrictions imposed on communications with the PLO.

[Al-Husayni] Does this take place in coordination with you?

['Arafat] More or less. We meet with this movement continuously. We held many meetings and contacts with it either through our men inside or outside the occupied territories.

[Al-Husayni] Did this movement play a mediation role to get you and Israeli officials together?

['Arafat] No. We have so far not met with any Israeli official except on the negotiations table.

[Al-Husayni] But there are reports that stipulate that several meetings had taken place in a number of European capitals and that one of the meetings was held with David Levi.

['Arafat] No. Not a single official meeting had taken place with Israeli officials. The meetings were held as part of a world seminar brokered by the United Nations and other international bodies. These meetings were not confined to us. They were also attended by UN officials and delegates from all over the world.

[Al-Husayni] What about the meeting between Nabil Sha'th ['Arafat's adviser] with the daughter of Moshe Dayan?

['Arafat] She came to the United Nations and shook hands with our delegation. She is a member of the Peace Now Movement. This took place in public.

[Al-Husayni] You requested a meeting with Rabin. What do you want to tell him?

['Arafat] Yes, I requested this meeting. I also asked that this meeting be held in public and under UN auspices. I want to ask him to give the Palestinians their right, and it is my right to ask him so. I will ask him to lead the Israeli delegation and come to the negotiations table and I will lead the Palestinian side. Like his predecessor Shamir, however, he is afraid even to sit with the Palestinian at the table because it will prove to the world that he is the occupier when I ask him to end the occupation of my people. Rabin has so far refused to hold negotiations with the Palestinian side on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338 because they mean the presence of occupied land. If the Palestinians ask for this land it will unmask Rabin and others who do not want to acknowledge that this land—the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem—is occupied.

[Al-Husayni] Is it true that you requested that the refugees committee, which is related to the current negotiations, hold its meetings in Tunisia?

['Arafat] No. This is not true. Tunisia has been asked by the peace conference sponsors to host the committee's fourth session by the end of next year. [as published] Tunisia has agreed and conveyed its acceptance to us.

[Al-Husayni] Let us move with Abu-'Ammar to another subject and ask him: What is your view of fundamentalism and Islamic awakening? Much is said about its being the alternative in Palestine. What is Abu-'Ammar's view?

['Arafat] I differentiate between masked fundamentalism and the Islamic awakening, of which I consider myself one of the symbols. God detests fundamentalism that harms and brings no benefit. The real Muslim is the active one who stays away from priests because there is no priesthood in Islam. The real Muslim respects the Jewish and Christian religions, as this verse from the holy Koran says: Of the people of Moses there is a section who guide and do justice in the light of truth.

[Al-Husayni] But aren't the people of Moses the rulers in Israel today?

['Arafat] Yes. But there are real Jews in Israel who refuse to be Israelis. I am talking about the Neturey Qarta. This group consults me on every detail and one of them was a member of the Palestinian delegation in New York. This angered the Israelis and upset the Americans. The Samaritans of Nabulus are also Palestinian Jews, not Israelis.

[Al-Husayni] Might Abu-'Ammar again propose a democratic Palestinian state?

['Arafat] And who said I don't think of this? When they confronted me by proposing an Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian confederation, I told them: I have a better offer: The democratic state. I told them this had been Fatah's proposal since 1969—a democratic state where Muslims, Christians, and Jews live in equality, justice, and fraternity and where there is respect for religion, creed, and race. I also proposed it several days ago to two Israeli journalists from YEDIOT AHRANOT who came to interview me. When the woman journalist asked me why I rejected the confederation proposal, I told her it was because I had a better offer: a single democratic state where Muslims, Jews, and Christians live together. She said to me: No. No. No. They are scared of this proposal. I would like to say that we do not lack a background. We are negotiating with the struggle of generations behind us. Our Fatah Movement's deeds are our assets. We understand every point in the situation and with the enemy.

[Al-Husayni] But what is the use of all this when the Israeli side has rejected everything so far?

['Arafat] This has been our lot with the Israelis since they came to this land. It will be like this until doomsday. The holy Koran says: Have they a share in dominion or power? "Behold, they give not a farthing to their fellow men" They offended God when they slaughtered the cow, as the holy Koran says: "Then they offered her in sacrifice, but not with goodwill." Is this not true? That was their behavior with God and the prophets. So how do you expect them to be with me? We know all this, so

I reiterate to you that the battle of negotiations with them is fiercer than any military operation I have waged.

[Al-Husayni] Are you still committed to the national Palestinian charter?

['Arafat] I am determined that I must pray in this mosque (he pointed to a huge picture of the holy al-Aqsa Mosque on the wall) in Jerusalem, from where Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven and the cradle of Christ.

[Al-Husayni] Why do the Israelis say 'Arafat is the obstacle to peace?

['Arafat] This is what Rabin said recently and reiterated. I know the background to his statement and I got the message. Rabin said this while he was planning to remove the obstacle, something disclosed recently by two British journalists in THE GUARDIAN. They exposed the Boeing 707 scheme in Negev in which five Israeli officers were accidentally killed during training. According to reports I received, the operation was against a distant target, not Hizballah. There is no need for a Boeing plane to control Hizballah's operations region. It is enough for the Israelis to be in Jazzin to control every Lebanese region of operations against them. The Israelis planned to assassinate Palestinian leaders, concentrating on Yasir 'Arafat, to remove the obstacle to peace and then impose their own peace. This is the same plane that carried the Israeli military command and controlled this region during the assassination of martyr Abu-Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir].

[Al-Husayni] Why do you not announce your withdrawal from the talks in response to these threats and this scandal?

['Arafat] Look, I would like to tell you something: I am not shortsighted. If you do not have nerves of steel, you cannot win your political or military battle. My brothers in the Fatah Movement and in the revolution never saw me tense. My nerves will remain calm and strong in all my battles. Did we not play chess and volleyball when we were under full siege in Beirut?

[Al-Husayni] That was when the people and the whole cadre supported you because you were fighting. But today the situation is different.

['Arafat] No. The Palestinian people are still behind me in all my battles.

[Al-Husayni] But we have seen and heard in every place where Palestinians live, even here in Tunisia, that the Palestinians reject the settlement option and consider it a humiliation for them. They demand an end to the series of concessions and withdrawal from the negotiating table.

['Arafat] I do not accept this argument, which is suggested by the impotent. Our people back their leadership in full. When there is reason to leave the negotiating table, I will do so without hesitation. But he who leads the battle is the leader. Do not forget I have been democratically elected and I am governed by institutions that are agreed upon, not by my own whims and emotions or those of my friends or supporters. We have the PNC, the PLO Central Council, the Revolutionary Council, the Central Committee, and the higher leadership. I am accountable to these institutions.

[Al-Husayni] But you have recently reiterated that the result of the negotiations is zero and that there is a deadlock. Does this not mean the time is right for withdrawal from the talks?

['Arafat] It is not that easy. The institutions must meet to discuss this. A decision to quit the talks may be made in the coming meetings. If we go to a new round of talks, the negotiations will be much more vicious and we will not abandon our rights under any circumstances.

[Al-Husayni] Let us move to another file, that of the Gulf and Iraq in particular. How do you view the Iraqi question after all the developments?

['Arafat] We are against the blockade imposed on Iraq's people, its children and women. What is happening there is unprecedented in history: An entire people is being subjected to blockade and denied medicine and baby milk. Yet they talk about human rights and freedoms!

[Al-Husayni] Isn't Saddam to blame for this tragedy?

['Arafat] If we want to speak of the causes, they are a continuation of the crisis in all its complexities. But I believe that as an Arab nation we must be fully aware of the implications. The Europeans, differing in language, ethnicity, customs, habits, and nationalities, have now forged a European unity and are on their way to forming a unified European army. Shouldn't we, the sons of a single nation and speakers of one tongue, speak to each other? Some of us have a dialogue with the Israelis but refuse to have a dialogue with the Arab brothers. At least let us have a dialogue among ourselves.

[Al-Husayni] Still, regional security and stability have been undermined, trust has been shaken, and dialogue has been halted.

['Arafat] I believe that anyone who seeks regional security and stability after what happened must accept first the principle of dialogue and second the theory of collective security. The issue goes beyond Iraq alone. We must also look around us. Iran has become a strong regional presence and consequently security and dialogue in the Gulf must include Arabs and Muslims. This means those who are now excluded must be brought into the process. This requires a lot of forbearance and a high sense of responsibility.

[Al-Husayni] So you are not only calling for a dialogue with Iraq and turning over a new leaf with it, but are also urging a dialogue with Iran and offering it a role in the Gulf.

['Arafat] I am for a sound, self-supporting, not self-contradicting, Arab-Islamic position in the Gulf. It should be so if we are really among the faithful. And fear tumult or oppression which affecteth not in particular only those of you who do wrong. [Koranic verse]. Verily speaks the Almighty.

[Al-Husayni] Do you want to address a special message to your Gulf brothers now that channels of communication between you have been cut?

['Arafat] Yes, I tell them: Let us jump over the hurdles represented by the effects of the Gulf war. Let us open a new chapter with all our brothers. I say this to everyone, to my brothers in the Gulf and our brothers in Iran. I tell them they have an obligation toward Palestine. Palestine is their trust. Let us look beyond our own borders. Let us look toward the shackled al-Aqsa Mosque, which is calling for succor, and the Palestinian people, who are actually starving in Gaza and are turning to their brothers for relief but finding no one to answer. Don't these people have rights? They are the steadfast garrison troops of the longest intifadah in history. Will there be no end to their hunger, their pain? The intifadah has so far offered 123,000 POW's and detainees, 112,000 wounded, of whom 7,000 have been handicapped, and 8,000 miscarriages induced by the use of poisonous gases, which they falsely call tear gas. Three committees—Dutch, Belgian, and American—have revealed this to the United Nations.

[Al-Husayni] What do you want to say to Iran?

['Arafat] I tell everyone we must keep our heads above the water of the deluge that is threatening us all. Let no one think he is not threatened. After Yalta there was Malta and instead of "Sykes-Picot" [1916 agreement dividing British and French influence in Syria and Iraq], there is now a new division and a redrawing of the regional map. We must not forget that Iran was among the countries affected by the redrawing of maps after World War II. Have we forgotten this? I say the danger is general and total. There are new maps in the region. We must understand this talk. World wars ended in political and economic alliances and in dividing influence among the greedy. We now face a new situation like this following the second Gulf war.

[Al-Husayni] All the time we have known you, you have talked about the long tunnel that must have an end. You have said you can see light at the end of the tunnel and that Palestine is near despite the difficult road and sufferings. Hope has always prompted you to get closer to this dream. Is this dream near?

['Arafat] Yes, despite the rough road, the many mines, and the many knives of friends and people close and not so close to you who are ready to stab you in the back. We will pray soon in this holy place, in liberated holy Jerusalem, with the grace of God. "There is no help except from God." [Koranic verse]

[Al-Husayni] How do you want to fulfill this dream? Will this be achieved through the negotiations that will bring you no more than local autonomy?

['Arafat] No, please, this is a mistake. They are offering us autonomy while we are demanding a one-year transitional period after which comes the final stage, independence.

[Al-Husayni] What will happen during this year?

['Arafat] Look, they are offering us local administration, a local council, or local elections. But we told them we are not willing to beautify the occupation. Let it remain an occupation. We reject this formula. We agree to an interim self-government authority for one year only [sultah li hukumah dhatiyyah mu'aqqatah li sanah wahidah] followed by the final stage, independence, and the declaration of the national authority over Palestinian territories, including holy Jerusalem as the capital of this state.

[Al-Husayni] One last question. Is there any guarantee that you will not go back on these conditions under any circumstances, especially as the stages, the objectives, and the slogans have changed several time in the past few years?

['Arafat] By God, if I go back on these, will you forgive me? Will the mother or the wife of the martyr forgive me? Will the daughter or the unborn baby of the martyr forgive me? Will my people forgive me? No. Never. I will not relinquish my people's inalienable rights even if my head is severed from my body. It is the final wall. The enemy must leave my land and accept the national political-geographical identity of Palestine with holy Jerusalem as its capital. Anything else is mere prattle. God Almighty said: "And to enter your temple as they had entered it before and to visit with destruction all that fell into their power." "We will, without doubt, help our apostles and those who believe, (both) in this world's life and the day when the witnesses will stand forth." And "Never does God depart from his promise." [Koranic verse]

'Arafat Discusses Peace Talks

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[Interview with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat by Sana' al-Sa'id in Cairo; date not given]

[Text] [Al-Sa'id] In the wake of the deportees' issue, some have said that Egypt has promised to continue pressuring Israel to negotiate directly with the PLO if you do not withdraw from the peace talks.

['Arafat] The Egyptian stand is not new. We have regarded Egypt as a partner, not an observer, in this process from the time the peace talks began. The multi sided meetings held by the cordon states are the best evidence of this. The two meetings held in Washington with Bush are the ones that should be taken into account.

The first was held with the Arab delegations, including the Palestinian one, on Thursday, 17 December. Another meeting was held on Friday, 18 December, and the delegation included my brother Faysal al-Husayni and Hanan 'Ashrawi as representatives of Jerusalem, deputy delegation leader Sa'ib 'Urayqat, and Kamil Mansur, a Palestinian from outside the territories. This gave a clear message from the U.S. Administration and President that the United States highlights its recognition of the oneness [wahdaniyah) of the Palestinian people inside and outside the territories and in Jerusalem. Israel is still rejecting this. It wants to recognize only the West Bank and Gaza, not Jerusalem. Of course, from the start Egypt has insisted on the oneness of representation from the West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, outside the territories, and the PLO, which is the Palestinian people's sole legitimate representative and a full member of the Arab League, the Islamic Conference Organization, the Nonaligned Movement, an observer member at the African summit and also an observer member at the United Nations under the sign "Palestine", just like Switzerland and the Vatican.

[Al-Sa'id] Israel has recently hinted that it might negotiate directly with the PLO on the condition that it proves its good intentions by supporting the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations and renouncing Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], which calls for the withdrawal from the talks.

['Arafat] I am the one who wants to set conditions for Israel. I do not accept the Israelis' conditions. I want Israel to abide by the rules of the game and by the framework and principles that constituted the basis for the peace talks, namely President Bush's initiative of "land for peace," and to implement Resolutions 242 and 338; that is, to withdraw from the occupied Arab Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and recognize the Palestinian people's legitimate political rights. We are the ones demanding guarantees, not Israel, and we will not allow it to demand guarantees. Israel has taken what it wants from this same administration. It took the $10 billion in loan guarantees. Before that, it got guarantees in Malta when Bush and Gorbachev reached an agreement that allowed the emigration of Jews to occupied Palestine. There is also the guarantee of qualitative military superiority in the region. Israel has the U.S. military arsenal in the region and can use it without asking the U.S. Administration or command.

[Al-Sa'id] Israel says that you are an obstacle to peace and more of a terrorist than anybody else. Why are these attacks against you being escalated?

['Arafat] I, in turn, believe that Rabin is the sole obstacle to peace. I will never forget that he came voluntarily with Sharon to besiege me in Beirut even though he was not a member of the cabinet. Rabin took part in the crimes perpetrated by Sharon against the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples, all of which were condemned by the investigative committee which condemned Sharon. He came of his own free will to share in Sharon's crimes.

[Al-Sa'id] Israel is asking the PLO to amend its charter, which calls for the destruction of Israel. It is not content with your 1988 declaration recognizing Israel and the two resolutions and renouncing terrorism. It regards this as the declaration of one man and is demanding that the Palestine National Council [PNC] vote on your comments.

['Arafat] Rabin must know that we do not submit to his conditions. We would not have gone to the peace process had the international conference not been imposed by the cosponsors, the United States, the sole power in the world, and the Soviet Union before its collapse. We went to it with the guarantees of the two superpowers because we do not trust Rabin, Shamir, or any other Israeli official. They are still the prisoners of their sick Zionist dreams of a Greater Israel that extends from the Nile to the Euphrates with Jerusalem as its capital. I tell them that Jerusalem is the capital of the State of Palestine. They should understand that time has rendered their sick dreams obsolete and that they cannot bring a new colonialism to our Arab region following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Berlin wall and the changes in the new world. I am warning that if the ongoing peace negotiations, which we have accepted despite the unfair conditions, fail, our Arab region will be heading toward total chaos. The "Balkanization" taking place in Yugoslavia now will be merely a minor rehearsal for what will happen on a larger scale.

[Al-Sa'id] Does this mean that the talks may collapse? Does the same possibility apply to the resumption of the armed struggle?

['Arafat] No. I have mentioned things that are far more than the resumption of the armed struggle; that is, chaos in the region. Unfortunately, Rabin will be responsible for this as a result of his hideous crime of mass transfer, which is a war crime similar to crimes of the Nazis tried at Nuremberg. If there is accountability, they [the Israelis] are supposed to be brought to account. When it comes to international legality, there should be no double standards, one in favor of Israel and the other against the Palestinians and the Arab nation.

[Al-Sa'id] Israel is trying to give the impression that the PLO refuses to hold elections in the occupied territories because if autonomy is applied, there will be elections that will produce local leaders, which will, in turn, make the PLO obsolete.

['Arafat] We reject the elections they are proposing because they are talking about municipal elections, which is not their concern. We want legislative elections in accordance with the letter of assurances and the peace conference's letter of invitation, which speaks of legislative elections that would lead to the "Palestinian Interim Self-Government Authority."

[Al-Sa'id] It was said that you are afraid of the elections, fearing that Hamas may pull the rug from under your feet.

['Arafat] Why should we fear Hamas? We went through 29 election rounds this year involving the chamber of commerce, unions, including the unions of teachers, students, physicians, women, workers; and other societies and institutions. The PLO won 25 of these rounds. In addition, who said that we are afraid of democracy? One of the things in which we take pride and cherish at the Palestinian arena is the oasis of democracy that we enjoy. Israel has nothing to do with the matter, so let them keep their hands off it, leave the land, and get out of the territories. Those are occupied territories, and they must leave the matter to the Palestinian people to decide who they want to choose. Do they want to impose their custodianship on us, on the Palestinian territories, and the Palestinian people? Some Jewish Americans once came to see me. I told them they were the elite everywhere: In the United States, in Britain, and in France. I added, however, that they were not the elite in Palestine; we are the elite in Palestine. The (Gavitz) Institute in Israel conducted a study last year and found that 14 in every 1,000 Israeli university graduates hold higher degrees; the number among the Palestinians is 18. So we best them. We are the elite in Palestine among those who consider themselves to be God's chosen people.

[Al-Sa'id] But there may be some difficulties that could prevent cooperation between the PLO and Hamas and keep the gap between you. I wonder if we could say that your stands are different, in conflict, or what?

['Arafat] What gap are you talking about? Why does the Israeli Knesset include rightists, leftists, ultra-orthodox, and communists? We, too, have a democracy. Why are they allowed this right while we are denied the right to have in our arena a composition of the Arab Liberation Front, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Palestinian Front, the Palestinian Jihad, the Communist Party, Hamas, al-Sa'iqah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command? Why do they not call this democracy? This is democracy. We must call things by their real name. We are proud that our Palestine National Council has all these groups; it truly and accurately reflects the composition of the Palestinian people.

[Al-Sa'id] If this diversity represents democracy, I would like to ask if there is any point of agreement between you and Hamas on purely national issues?

['Arafat] Yes. One is the political program endorsed by the PNC on the basis of which I was elected.

[Al-Sa'id] Israel promised a temporary linkage between the first and second phases in any settlement with the Palestinians; you insist on the need for substantial linkage between the two stages.

['Arafat] It promised? Why? Can it refuse to promise? Is it its plan? It is a U.S.-Russian plan. It used to be U.S.-Soviet, but now it is Russian. Is Israel in a position to promise or not to promise? Why? You think highly of Israel, but I am not astonished by Israeli power. I do not see Israel as "super." If Israel has 250 nuclear warheads, the Soviet Union had 33,000 warheads and it fell apart. I am not one of those impressed by Israeli power. I believe in people power. All kinds of colonialists came to our nation—Tatar, Roman, Greek, and Europeans—I do not say Crusaders because the Christians of our country fought with us and were not called Crusaders - Spanish, Portuguese, British, and French. Where are they? They vanished as colonialists.

[Al-Sa'id] What about the possibility of an Israeli withdrawal from one part, from "Gaza?" Is this conceivable and acceptable or is it an old proposal?

['Arafat] This is a new and old issue. Israel occasionally talks about this and proposes it. I would say let Israel return Gaza to Egypt, the West Bank to Jordan, the Golan Heights to Syria, and the Lebanese territory to Lebanon. What Israel maintains and puts forward periodically is only an attempt to play with our nerves. These are tactical maneuvers with which Israel tries to deceive, no more no less.

[Al-Sa'id] Clinton said recently that if a peace agreement is reached between Israel and any Arab party, Israel will need high-level security arrangements.

['Arafat] Clinton said that President Bush gave Israel numerous guarantees, the latest of which was the $10-billion loan guarantees. He provided it with a qualitative military edge and gave it the U.S. arms arsenal to use as they wish. Could Clinton give them more? I do not think so. What is the significance of Clinton's remark? I think it is no more than an attempt to appease the Jewish voice.

[Al-Sa'id] With the beginning of 1993, are you optimistic that the United States will remain committed to the peace process?

['Arafat] I cannot predict whether the United States will remain committed to the peace process. We want to see if President Clinton keeps his word about democracy and human rights. We will wait and see whether the Palestinian people will have the right to enjoy human rights in their independent state. This year will be a real test for President Clinton, and we will wait and see.

[Al-Sa'id] Back to Israel and to reports that the water problem may delay Israel's withdrawal from Arab territories, such as the West Bank and the Golan. Israel believes that whoever controls those areas controls water resources.

['Arafat] This means expansion. If this is true, the answer is not with me but with the entire Arab nation. Let the Arab leaders meet, respond to what is said, and do what they must.

[Al-Sa'id] Regarding the deportees, I note that one of the justifications Rabin cited in deporting 415 Palestinians was the attempt to absorb the anger of Israeli public opinion and save his government from falling in the wake of the kidnapping and killing of an Israeli border soldier.

['Arafat] Who killed that soldier? One, two, or three people? Why didn't Israel arrest and try them for what they did? They can not protect their country. Should 415 people be punished for a act committed by one individual? Which law says that? Let them arrest and try the murderer. Even if they suspected five or 10 people, let them try them. What Israel did is deporting all those people without trial is against the Geneva Convention and is a war crime punishable by international law.

[Al-Sa'id] Despite Security Council Resolution 799 and despite pressure being place on it to implement the resolution by repatriating the deportees, Peres said no one should believe that the Security Council is a superpower that could order Israel to take them back.

['Arafat] Why? Is he bigger than international legitimacy? International forces went to Bosnia-Hercegovina, Namibia, Somalia, the Gulf, and Cambodia. Is he bigger than international legitimacy? This is indicative of the haughtiness of Israel and its officials. I tell him this in response: Where has Hitler's haughtiness gone? Haughtiness is bound to go.

[Al-Sa'id] Back to the Palestinians in the occupied land. It has been said that the Gulf states want to aid the Palestinians in the occupied territories through Hamas, not the PLO. Do you have any objections to that?

['Arafat] First, no aid has been given to the occupied territories for 32 months. The Gulf states have not paid the Palestinian people a single penny although they and the Iranians encourage fundamentalist movements, such as Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, in Palestine while they bar donations from reaching the Palestinian people. As I said, no oil state has given the Palestinians a single penny for 32 months.

[Al-Sa'id] Not even through Egyptian mediation?

['Arafat] Not one oil state has given the Palestinians a single penny. Therefore, there is famine in Gaza Strip. I tell them one thing: "And those in whose wealth is a recognized right. For the (needy) who asks and him who is prevented (for some reason from asking)" [Koranic verses]

PNC Official Views Tunis Meeting on Deportees

NC0501143493 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Deputy Palestine National Council [PNC] speaker Taysir Qubba'ah has reiterated the Palestinian organizations' rejection of any solution in the case of the Palestinian deportees that does not stipulate their return to their homeland.

Qubba'ah told the Voice of the People that the PLO is holding contacts to formulate a united stand by the Arab countries participating in the peace talks in Washington that will at least suspend participation in the talks until the deportees' issue is resolved.

He said the dialogue between the PLO and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has not resolved their political differences, adding that preparations are under way to resume the dialogue soon in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum.

The deputy PNC speaker, who met Lebanese officials in the past two days, went on to say that the aim of his visit is to thank the Lebanese Government for its correct stand on the deportation issue and to seek to formulate joint coordinated steps in addition to discussing the living conditions of Palestinians in Lebanon. He said his talks with Lebanese officials were positive.

Qubba'ah added: [Begin Qubba'ah recording] I came from Tunis where I attended a leadership meeting that decided we will not participate in or set any date for a new round of talks before the return of the deportees. That is the least we can do. I do not believe in suspending the negotiations until the deportees return but adopt the view of complete withdrawal from the Madrid-Washington talks, because this is for us as Palestinians a destructive course that aims to liquidate the Palestinian cause. [end recording]

'Palestinian Sources' on Hamas-PLO Meeting in Khartoum

NC0501175393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1624 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian sources in Cairo have said that the latest meeting between the PLO and the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, in Khartoum did not result in any significant change in the positions of both parties on a number of main issues, primarily the position on participation in the peace talks and on Hamas' conditions to join the PLO. In a statement to MENA today, these sources said that both parties agreed to cooperate in confronting the Israeli occupation in the occupied Arab territories, to back the intifadah, and to increase services offered to Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories.

The sources stressed that Hamas clings to two basic conditions to join the PLO: The need to withdraw from the current peace talks to strive to liberate all Palestinian territories from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River; and to get 40 percent of the seats of the Palestine National Council [PNC], considered to be the Palestinian parliament.

The sources pointed out that the PLO stressed to Hamas that the structure of the PLO and the PNC is based on diverse coalition of a group of organizations, groups, and Palestinian personalities. The PLO emphasized that no one can alter this precise equation without consulting all parties concerned because this equation governs the PLO's democratic march. The sources noted that both the PLO and Hamas agreed to continue the dialogue and hold new rounds to discuss issues on which no agreement was reached.

Peace Talks Delegation Leader on Israel, PLO

TA0501162793 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 5 Jan 93 pp 1, 15

[Report on an interview with Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, by Tahir Shuraytah in Gaza on 4 January]

[Text] Gaza—Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi has called on the co-sponsors of the peace conference and the UN Security Council to pressure Israel to adhere to Security Council Resolution 242 and the UN Geneva conventions on human rights.

In an interview with AL-QUDS yesterday, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi asserted that Israel must return the 413 deportees to their homes before the negotiating delegation can study the feasibility of continuing the peace talks in Washington.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said that after 14 months of negotiations, we are still at point zero. He affirmed that the delegation will not go to the talks in their present form without the formulation of a new approach to the negotiations whereby Israel will adhere to UN resolutions.

In a related development, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi criticized Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin for giving the world the impression that he is offering something in the talks, while in fact he is not offering anything at the negotiating table. Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said that Rabin proposed that the Palestinian delegation meet with him in order to exploit this meeting in the media to Israel's benefit and in order to hint at the existence of an alternative leadership to the PLO with whom to negotiate.

Asked what if the Palestinian leadership in Tunis decides to send the negotiating delegation to Washington on the basis of the current conditions, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi replied: Despite our respect for the PLO, as it is our leadership, we are residents and not its employees. We have our own views and act according to the dictates of our conscience.

In answer to another question about his stance should Israel decide to recognize the PLO at this stage as a result of pressure from the Israeli left wing, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said he does not believe Israel would be serious in this recognition but rather would aim to use it to drive a wedge into Palestinian society. Dr. 'Abd- al-Shafi added that it is inconceivable that Israel should make this absurd decision, which is biased in one party's favor, and recognize the PLO, which it has described as terrorist. Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said that this would be an obvious maneuver, adding that if Israel does decide to recognize the PLO, it should prove its seriousness by returning the deportees.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi appealed to the Palestinians to maintain unity and said that this is the only way to guarantee progress in the national march. Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi called for the establishment of a collective Palestinian leadership that acts on a democratic basis and includes all Palestinian forces present in the arena.

Possibility of 'Arafat-Carter Meeting Noted

PM3112124992 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 30 Dec 92 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Arab-U.S. Contacts To Arrange First Carter-'Arafat Meeting in Cairo"]

[Text] Cairo—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that several Arab states are currently making extensive contacts with Washington to arrange the first meeting of its kind between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and PLO Political Department Head Faruq Qaddumi and former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who has begun his activities as an envoy for the new U.S. Administration.

Sources have pointed out that this meeting will be one of the missions assigned to the former U.S. president during his awaited tour of the capitals of the Arab cordon states, Egypt, and Israel in the first quarter of 1993.

This tour is being ordered by the new U.S. President Bill Clinton, who announced that he would seek Carter's help in the peace process and in narrowing the gap between the Arab parties and Israel, in view of his previous experience in the negotiations held in 1978 between Egypt and Israel which led to the signing of the peace treaty.

The well-informed sources did not rule out that Cairo could be the first capital in the region expected to host this historic meeting. The Jordanian capital, Amman comes second.

The sources said that the meeting could be a practical prelude to the awaited meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and President Yasir 'Arafat.

PLO Economic Influence Declines in Territories

TA0101120693 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Jan 93 p A3

[Report by Yosi Torpstein]

[Excerpt] The drop in PLO funds to various institutions in the territories, especially to the supreme committees set up last year, has led to a significant reduction in the organization's ability to dictate policy on coordinating economic development among the Palestinian institutions in the territories. That evaluation was heard recently from Palestinians in the territories involved in the economic sector.

The sources believe that as a result of this situation, the inhabitants of the territories have broad powers in the economic and social structure, so that while there is no question that PLO-Tunis forms the political leadership of the Palestinians, its influence has been reduced.

Over the past year, the inhabitants of the territories have spent time setting up and strengthening the governing frameworks, such as the supreme councils and the organizations dealing with health, tourism, and education. But, according to the sources, the decision on the establishment of these frameworks was for the most part political, and they do not have real content. Due to the PLO's economic crisis, funds were not allocated to most of the supreme councils, which have almost nothing to do and deal with "coordinating" between various institutions.

Moreover, the PLO has not yet defined the character of the supreme councils and their fields of authority. For instance, it has still not been made clear whether the councils will be skeleton frameworks for future ministries or will serve only as advisory bodies, whether they will have the authority to handle all planning in the fields in which they will be dealing, and whether they will be able to carry and enforce their decisions on nongovernmental organizations and the private sector in the territories. The PLO is continuing its deliberations on these issues, so far without making any clear-cut decisions.

The issue of rebuilding the institutions in the territories and increasing their effectiveness, especially in the economic and social fields, is on the Palestinian agenda. There are currently several plans to train administrative, professional, and economic manpower, funded by foreign countries. [passage omitted]

Algeria

Reporters Charged for Publishing 'Defense Secrets'

LD0601022393 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 2130 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Six journalists at EL WATAN, including the director of the publication, Omar Belhouchet, have been placed under a committal order—they were brought before the examining magistrate of Algiers Court this afternoon. According to a communique from the Ministry of Culture and Communication, the six journalists were accused of the premature publication of information, which was perpetrated in a (?print-run) covered by the field of national defense secrets. This action seriously hampered the progress of the inquiry into a criminal act. The ministry had then issued a decree suspending the distribution of the daily EL WATAN, and the six journalists were detained at the premises of the national gendarmerie.

After hearing their statements this afternoon, the examining magistrate accepted five charges against them in accordance with Articles 86, 88, and 89 of the information code, and Articles 69 and 75 of the penal code. Article 86 of the information code stipulates, for example, that anyone publishing or broadcasting [words indistinct] erroneous or tendentious news likely to harm state security and national unity is (?liable for) a prison sentence of five to 10 years. Article 69 of the penal code stipulates that anyone who—without intention of treason or espionage—provides knowledge of military information, which has not been made public by the appropriate authority and the disclosure of which is clearly likely to harm national defense, to non-qualified persons or the public can be punished by a term of imprisonment of one to five years.

In a statement made this evening and picked up by APS, the EL WATAN group expresses the view, I quote, that the charges are based on groundless arguments with the evident aim of instituting false proceedings against it with the aim of destroying it, end of quotation.

Special Judicial Councils To Deal With Terrorism

LD0401231093 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] The process of setting up special judicial councils that would look into issues of sabotage and terrorism has been completed. The process started on 4 December, the deadline for the period of repentance granted by the state to perpetrators of sabotage acts and terrorism and all those implicated in them. The structure was completed in accordance with the legislative decree dated 30 September pertaining to combating sabotage and terrorism.

A statement by the Ministry of Justice issued today said that a sufficient number of investigating judges have been appointed at the level of those special judicial councils so that responsibility for the relevant files and investigations will be assumed within legal time limits.

The ministry's statement included the Justice Minister's affirmation on the need for strict implementation of the law in confronting perpetrators of terrorism and sabotage acts and those implicated in them. The statement also included the minister's affirmation on the need to deal with those important issues within the framework of the traditional respect for the right of defense of society, and in accordance with constitutional guarantees.

Government Sets Out Economic Programs for 1993

LD0501150793 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] The 1993 budget stipulates a 53.7 percent increase in the investments budget in comparison to last year. The government also hopes to provide 126,000 new jobs, and is resuming the construction of social housing schemes after having dropped these schemes during the previous years. These measures were announced today by Messaoud Ait Chaalal, the government's official spokesman, during a news conference which was attended by correspondent Fathi Saidi.

[Fathi Saidi] Mr. Ait Chaalal dwelt on five points: the 1993 budget, social housing schemes, defending the purchasing power of the poor classes, the role of the press, and dialogue with trade unions.

The government's official spokesman pointed out that the government council met yesterday and approved the 1993 budget, which is has now been submitted to the Higher Council of State.

The annual budget falls within the scope of medium-term economic projections. These projections cover two terms. The first term, from 1993 to 1994, is a term for austerity and firmness which will be spread on everybody, so its effects should not represent a burden for the most deprived classes. The second term, from 1995 to 1997, will create the necessary conditions for reviving national economy.

The 1993 budget stipulates a 53.7 percent increase in the investments budget in comparison to last year, as you said. The public works, housing, agriculture and irrigation sectors will be the driving force.

The budget also aims to protect jobs and hopes to provide a further 126,000 new jobs. Regarding the housing issue, Mr. Ait Chaalal announced that the state will rebuild social housing schemes and will work to build some 60,000 to 80,000 houses, including 40,000-50,000 social housing schemes.

In addition, efforts to defend the purchasing power of the poor classes will continue: essential commodities will be available at reasonable prices throughout the country, and prices of wheat, semolina, bread, and milk will remain subsidized by the state.

In the health sector, necessary and essential medicines will be provided. In this context, the government expects 1993 to be better than last year.

The government's spokesman also talked about the recent visit to Algeria by IMF Director General Camdessus, and said the visitor is satisfied with Algeria's basic choices, and that dialogue will continue.

On the role of the mass media and journalists, Mr. Ait Chaalal called for wisdom and national spirit. In this connection, he also called for the dialogue with the press to proceed without emotion. He admitted that the press has a role to play in society, albeit within the law, and in the spirit of responsibility and nationalism. Mr. Ait Chaalal stated that Algeria is going through an exceptional phase, therefore it cannot behave as if things were normal.

Considering Algeria's situation, Ait Chaalal said frankly that there should be censorship; noting that this is practiced even in societies which have experienced democracy for centuries. Mr. Ait Chaalal said: In a nutshell, a media scoop should not be written with the blood of martyrs. Hence, he added, the government intends to take some measures which will not reach the level of censorship. However, all reports pertaining to security issues will be subjected to an embargo system, and will not published without the agreement and stamp of the appropriate services. Decrees regulating this issue will be published.

About the social aspect, Mr. Ait Chaalal said relations between the government and General Union of Algerian Workers [UGTA] are good. During a recent meeting between the government and the UGTA, everybody praised the implementation of all the measures that were adopted. In the coming days, the government will hold another meeting with the UGTA general secretariat to define the horizons and take the fundamental and necessary measures to restructure and find the real solutions for the public local firms that employ 200,000 workers in order to revive this sector.

Egypt

'Amr Musa Criticizes Sudanese Memo

NC0601105593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1000 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Bonn, 6 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stressed that the movement of any Egyptian civilians or the military at the 22d parallel in the Hala'ib region is considered movement on Egyptian land.

In a statement to Deutsche Welle's Arabic section, the foreign minister said that there are no border disputes with Sudan because Hala'ib is Egyptian land in accordance with the 1899 agreement. He emphasized that Egypt will not cede one inch of this land because it is 100-percent Egyptian territory.

Musa said that Sudan's memorandum against Egypt contains many fallacies, noting that nobody can challenge Egypt over even an inch of its land and this is unacceptable.

Sidqi Holds Meeting on Sudanese School Decision

NC0201141393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1321 GMT 2 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 2 Jan (MENA)—Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi held a meeting this afternoon to discuss the repercussions of the Sudanese Government's decision to place the schools of the Egyptian educational mission in Sudan under the control of the Sudanese Education Ministry.

This came within the framework of Egypt's eagerness to preserve fraternal relations between the Egyptian and Sudanese people.

A number of concerned ministers attended the meeting.

PLO's 'Arafat Arrives on Visit 5 Jan

NC0501201993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1942 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Cairo tonight on a visit scheduled to last several days.

He was received by Jamal al-Sayyid, minister of state for war production.

Mubarak Receives 'Arafat

NC0601104893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1023 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 6 Jan (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat this morning. Present at the meeting were Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs; Sa'id Kamal, Palestine ambassador in Cairo; and Zuhdi al-Qidrah, Fatah representative in Cairo.

The talks during the meeting dealt with recent developments on the Arab and international arenas.

'Amr Musa Receives Message From Russia's Kozyrev

NC0501164193 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that he has received a message from Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev today on the Palestinian deportees, in view of Egypt's efforts to secure their return to their homes in accordance with Security Council Resolution 799. The Russian minister's message is in reply to Musa's letter on the deportees.

Musa stressed the importance of solving the problem before the next round of Arab-Israeli peace talks, scheduled to begin on 20 February, noting that contacts with Israel on this issue are continuing. [passage omitted]

Document Reveals Volume of Trade With Israel

NC0501150993 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1108 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—The opposition paper AL-SHA'B published the following item on its first page today: An official document prepared by the Central Statistics Department revealed that the volume of trade with the Zionist enemy has increased in the past five years. Trade totaled around 3.589 billion Egyptian pounds during that period.

The document showed that Egyptian exports to Israel totalled 3,338,227,538 Egyptian pounds while imports from Israel reached 249,881,960 Egyptian pounds. The document said 1991 saw the highest volume of Egyptian exports to Israel, some 1,186,780 Egyptian pounds, while 1990 was the best year for Israeli exports to Egypt, totaling some 109,281,000 Egyptian pounds.

Israeli Embassy Seeks More Travel Facilities

NC0501160793 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1109 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—The opposition paper AL-SHA'B published the following report on its front page today: The Israeli Embassy in Cairo has sent a memorandum to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry asking for better facilities for Israeli passengers travelling to the country by air and land. The embassy said that Israelis are forced to undergo too many searches, and it accused security forces at Cairo airport of failing to provide protection for Israelis arriving on El Al flights.

Security sources at Cairo airport say that the Israeli Embassy is trying to exploit the political situation to obtain more privileges and facilities.

Israel Said Enhancing Capability of Reactor

NC0501140093 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1111 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—The opposition newspaper AL-SHA'B published the following item on its front page today: Official sources at Egyptian nuclear institutes have reported that the Zionist enemy recently increased the capacity of its Dimona nuclear reactor to 155 megawatts, unbeknownst to the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency]. The reactor's capacity since its construction in the early 1960's had been 24 megawatts. The sources added that the aim is to enhance the yield of the plutonium-separation units in the reactor for use in the greatest possible number of nuclear warheads.

The Zionist enemy is also trying to conclude agreements with Western countries, instead of Russia, to buy a nuclear reactor to be constructed in the Negev 25 km from the Egyptian area of al-'Awja. Three years ago the Zionist enemy signed a contract to buy a reactor from Russia.

Mubarak Receives Armenian, Luxembourg Ministers

NC0501095593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0820 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Armenian acting Foreign Minister Arman Kirakosyan at the Presidential Palace in Heliopolis this morning. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

President Mubarak also received Jacques Poos, deputy prime minister and foreign minister of Luxembourg, at the Presidential Palace this morning. Foreign Minister Musa attended the meeting.

Armenian Minister Makes Statement

NC0501123393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0910 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (MENA)—Acting Armenian Foreign Minister Arman Kirakosyan said he conveyed the Armenian president's greetings and thanks to President Husni Mubarak. He also handed President Mubarak a message dealing with the existing cooperation between the two countries.

In a statement after meeting President Mubarak today, the Armenian minister said the talks dealt with important issues, primarily the historic relations between the Arab and Armenian peoples. He stressed the importance of the continuing cooperation between Egypt and his country in the economic, scientific, technical, and cultural fields.

Kirakosyan said an agreement was signed yesterday on consultations between the two Foreign Ministries and the opening of an Armenian Embassy in Cairo. He said the consultations will touch on all issues of mutual concern.

Asked about Armenia's stand on Bosnia-Hercegovina, Kirakosyan said his country supports a peaceful solution.

Asked about developments in the situation between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian minister said the situation remains difficult, noting that Azerbaijan is trying to drag Armenian into the conflict. He denied reports his country has any regional demands in Azerbaijan. He said Armenia is trying to solve the problem peacefully and achieve peace for the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Armenia's acting foreign minister welcomed the signing of the START II treaty between the United States and Russia on reducing their strategic weapons. He said his country's foreign policy relies on peaceful coexistence among all nations and countries. We will continue our policy with all the neighboring countries after the Nagorno-Karabakh problem is solved, he added.

Armenian Embassy Opens in Cairo

LD0401142993 Cairo MENA in English 1330 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, Jan. 4 (MENA)—Armenian Foreign Minister Ashot Kirakosyan and the Armenian charge d'affaires here Dr. Eduard Nalbandian officially opened the Armenian Embassy here today.

They hoisted the Armenian flag on the embassy building in a ceremony marking the inauguration of the first ever Armenian Embassy in an Arab country.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa attended the celebrations together with the ambassadors of foreign countries to Egypt.

Luxembourg's Poos Meets Mubarak

NC0501125393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1000 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Excerpts] Cairo, 5 Jan (MENA)—Jacques Poos, deputy prime minister and foreign minister of Luxembourg, said after meeting President Mubarak this morning that he and his excellency the president reviewed volatile world problems. [passage omitted]

Poos said the Middle East problem, the situation in Yugoslavia, other regional issues, and Egypt's problems with its neighbors, especially Sudan, were also reviewed during the meeting.

He said President Mubarak told him Sudan is financing and encouraging terrorist operations in north Africa.

He said President Mubarak is very interested in the Egyptian-Sudanese border issue and will not make concessions on it.

Poos said Egypt and Luxembourg agreed that the expulsion of 415 Palestinians is an illegitimate practice that conflicts with the Geneva agreement and violates human rights. Israel must allow the Palestinian deportees to return to their homes, he noted.

He said the killing of an Israeli soldier was shameful and a condemned act, but that Israel could discover the perpetrators of the crime and had no right to adopt collective punishment. The Israeli measure, he added, is a serious obstacle to the peace process.

Poos said he hoped the problem would be solved in the next few days through the direct talks currently under way and that the deportees would return to their homes.

Asked whether Luxembourg and the EC intend to use their relations with Israel and the region's states to intervene directly to solve this problem, Poos said: Yes. The EC has issued a statement condemning the Israeli practice. He said Denmark, the current EC chairman, is holding contacts with the Israeli Government on the issue. [passage omitted]

Religious Cooperation Accord Signed With Tunisia

NC0301095993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0919 GMT 3 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Tunis, 3 Jan (MENA)—Egypt and Tunisia today signed a new protocol on cooperation in Islamic and religious fields. Awqaf Minister Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub signed for the Egyptian side and Tunisian Minister of Religious Affairs Ali Chabbi signed for the Tunisian side.

Dr. Mahjub later said that the protocol involves a joint plan to confront extremist and terrorist movements through exchanging views and ideas and arranging visits to both countries by Islamic scholars, advocates, and thinkers to clarify the moderate aspects of enlightened Islamic thought. [passage omitted]

Mubarak Holds Meetings on Foreign, Domestic Issues

NC0501160893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1307 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Excerpts] Cairo, 5 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak held two expanded meetings today that were attended by the prime minister and other ministers. Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said that discussions dealt with a number of foreign and domestic issues; most importantly the Middle East peace process and the effects of the Palestinian deportees on efforts to push the peace process forward. In the first meeting, President Mubarak listened to a Foreign Ministry report on the peace process and contacts Egypt is holding with all parties concerned to move the process forward. President Mubarak also reviewed the country's economic situation and a report submitted by Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi on the upcoming stage of the economic reform program. [passage omitted]

In addition, the information minister said that President Mubarak listened to a report on internal security and measures taken by the Interior Ministry to consolidate internal stability in the country and strike at and track down criminal extremist elements. In this regard, President Mubarak stressed the need to swiftly get the facts before the people to expose the terrorist schemes and straighten out any mistaken or incorrect reports and to avoid any confusion at home or abroad. The information minister then mentioned a report carried by a foreign news agency yesterday on a bomb explosion, which was groundless.

In the second meeting, President Mubarak discussed measures to achieve comprehensive development and upgrade living conditions in the randomly built areas around the governorates of Cairo, al-Jizah, and Alexandria. President Mubarak made sure that all the competent ministers and experts were present at the meeting so that the ministries could play their role developing and upgrading these areas. [passage omitted]

UN Chief Butrus-Ghali Contrasts Somalia, Bosnia

NC0301170093 Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic 26 Dec 92 p 7

[Interview with UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali by Thana' Yusuf in New York; date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Yusuf] The Security Council is carrying out a humanitarian mission in Somalia. Can this be seen as a precedent that can be repeated in other countries?

[Butrus-Ghali] The Security Council's adoption of Resolution 794, which authorizes a unified international force to create the necessary climate for distributing humanitarian assistance in Somalia sets an extremely important precedent. It is a turning point, not only in the history of the United Nations, but in the history of international relations. With this resolution, the Security Council laid the cornerstone for a realistic and more comprehensive outlook on the concept of national sovereignty, which can be abused for certain purposes. I am not trying to simplify or exaggerate things; this is only the first step, which will advance in the next few years. As the well-known Chinese proverb says: A 1,000-mile journey begins with a single step.

All of us perhaps recall that until recently, human rights were considered to be under the jurisdiction of a state's sovereignty and internal affairs. This is no longer acceptable. International law has evolved to the point where it forces states to respect human rights and it views the protection of human rights as a collective responsibility.

An important point must be taken into consideration when the Somalia operation is analyzed. The situation there is unique; there is no government. Indeed, the absence of any authority is why the conflict among the warring factions has gotten worse. If there had been a government in Somalia, the situation would certainly have been more complicated, because intervention would have required its approval.

[Yusuf] The situation in Bosnia-Hercegovina and the signs that tension is spreading there constitute a threat to international peace and security. Why does the UN Security Council not use force to put an end to this conflict? What are the obstacles to such a move?

[Butrus-Ghali] The situation in Bosnia-Hercegovina is a source of great worry. The recent fast-breaking events there are alarming. As is known, the issue is being examined by the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly. There are several obstacles blocking the use of force to end that conflict.

The first of these is military. The United Nations does not have sufficient forces or even the means to increase the efficiency of its forces currently in Sarajevo and Zagreb. It is obvious that if we want to increase the number of troops, boost their capabilities, and transform them from a conventional peacekeeping force to a peacemaking or peace-creating force, the burden for such a move will have to be borne by UN member countries. This is where other problems will surface.

There are financial obstacles. Countries refuse to increase their financial contributions. In fact, some of the countries that have provided peacekeeping troops since the UN peacekeeping tasks were initiated are now hesitating, because such operations require huge budgets. The cost goes up when it is a question of enforcing peace, which is a military operation, rather than supervising peace.

There are also political obstacles. Every case has its own circumstances. The situation in former Yugoslavia is very complicated. European countries and the United States are circumspect about military intervention.

From this perspective, we cannot compare the situation in Bosnia- Hercegovina with the situation in Somalia. Despite the deteriorating situation in Bosnia-Hercegovina, humanitarian assistance finds its way to those in need. This contrasts with the situation in Somalia, a country that lacks an authority capable of stopping looting and terror. I believe that one way of helping to resolve the problem in Bosnia-Hercegovina is to increase the number and efficacy of UN troops there. The United Nations cannot do that alone. This is why I proposed to the Islamic Conference Organization member-countries to establish a Bosnia-Hercegovina fund to finance the increase of UN force in Yugoslavia and contribute to the reconstruction efforts there.

I believe that the implementation of this idea will be a positive and practical expression of the Islamic countries' desire to make an effective contribution to resolving this crisis.

[Yusuf] But the United Nations is being accused of reluctance to use force to put an end to the war in Bosnia-Hercegovina.

[Butrus-Ghali] This is wrong. The use of force falls within the power of the Security Council. It is the Security Council, not the United Nations or the secretary general, that is reluctant. Sometimes, certain members of the Security Council prefer to blame the UN secretariat, which is the instrument of implementation. [passage omitted]

Ministry Cited on 'Extremist' Attacks on Buses

NC0501141693 Paris AFP in English 1356 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Excerpts] Asyut, Egypt, Jan 5 (AFP)—Suspected Muslim extremists attacked two buses carrying holidaymakers in southern Egypt on Tuesday, including one with 20 Japanese on board, the interior ministry and police here said.

The gunmen, who had hidden on the banks of a canal, fled as police escorting the buses fired back. None of the holidaymakers was injured, police said here. [passage omitted]

The buses, travelling in convoy with police cars ahead and behind, suffered only minor damage and continued on their way from the major tourist centre of Luxor to Cairo, police said.

The Japanese were all in one bus, while the nationalities of those in the second was not released. [passage omitted]

Police sealed off the Dayrut area and launched a manhunt through surrounding fields. They also closed the main Aswan to Cairo road for two hours along a 150 kilometre (90 mile) stretch between the southern towns of Asyut and al-Minya. [passage omitted]

Further on Tourist Bus Incident

NC0501134993 Paris AFP in English 1256 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Asyut, Egypt, Jan 5 (AFP)—Suspected Muslim extremists fired on a bus carrying 20 Japanese holidaymakers on Tuesday in a fresh blow against Egypt's ailing tourist industry.

The gunmen fled as police escorting the bus opened fire and none of the Japanese was injured, police said.

The shooting happened in open countryside 10 kilometres (six miles) south of Dayrut, in a region of southern Egypt where foreign tourists have been targeted by fundamentalists.

The bus suffered only minor damage and continued on its way from the major tourist centre of Luxor to Cairo.

It was the first attack on foreign tourists since gunmen wounded four Germans in November. A British woman tourist was killed in an attack near Dayrut on October 21.

The underground group behind the attacks, al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah [Islamic Group], last week warned all foreigners to leave Egypt, saying their lives were threatened by the conflict between fundamentalists and the government.

The group has targeted tourists because it says they bring alien customs and morals that offend Islam.

Government officials report the number of tourists—a record three million visited in 1991 and pumped three billion dollars into the economy—has dropped by 25 percent since October, compared to the same period last year.

But tourism industry sources say the drop is between 30 and 40 percent, and crowds have been sparse at such major attractions as the Pyramids.

More than 60 people have died since fundamentalist violence erupted in the Upper Egyptian province of Asyut in March, including many police officers and Coptic Christians.

Egyptian authorities have fought back with mass arrests as well as anti-terrorist laws speeding up legal procedures. They have also stepped up protection of tourists, particularly those passing through the Asyut region.

Official Denies Tourists Attacked

NC0601111093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1050 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 6 Jan (MENA)—Sayyid Musa, director of the Tourism Promotion Authority, has denied that any armed attack or any attack has taken place in any governorate in Egypt against any tourist groups currently visiting the country since the recent incidents in November.

In an exclusive statement to MENA, Musa stressed that the report carried by a foreign news agency that a group of tourists came under armed attack and that fire was opened on a tourist bus carrying 20 Japanese tourists while traveling near Dayrut yesterday was baseless and completely untrue.

He said that the Japanese group, which is still in Cairo, denounced the news agency's report, adding that this group will take part in the news conference that the Tourism Promotion Authority will be holding tonight so as to disprove the foreign news agency's allegations. [passage omitted]

Official Says Raids Aim To Ensure Security

NC0401112393 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1047 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 4 Jan (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—Major General 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Hilali, assistant interior minister in charge of Asyut security, has stated that the intensive security raids staged by security organs in Asyut in the past 10 days resulted in the capture of 312 unlicensed weapons, including 128 automatic rifles, four machine guns, 19 firearms, 24 pistols, seven shotguns, 139 locally made pistols, and 17,000 bullets.

He added that the raids targeted the terrorists' hideouts and were aimed at capturing unlicensed weapons in certain areas in Asyut, where vendettas are rife, and ensuring security and safety for citizens all over the governorate.

'Terrorist' Arrested on Arrival in Saudi Arabia

NC0501135093 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1106 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—An Egyptian terrorist was arrested after arriving in Saudi Arabia on the pretext of performing minor pilgrimage. Reports indicate that the terrorist, Ahmad Mahmud Muhammad Nafi', 34, is an active member of extremist groups and wanted by justice.

The Saudi authorities arrested him at Jeddah Airport and handed him over to Mahmud Hajjaj, 30, an EgyptAir security officer who traveled to Jeddah to take delivery of the suspect. Although handcuffed, the terrorist assaulted the security officer, viciously biting him on the shoulder and causing a deep gash in his escape attempt. This happened before he was taken on board the plane and deported to Egypt for interrogation in connection with the charges against him.

The terrorist was born in Damanhur in 1959 and works as a freelance accountant. Entry and exit visa stamps to Pakistan and Sudan were found in his passport.

After he arrived at Cairo Airport, Egyptian security authorities took charge of him and he is being interrogated with the aim of revealing extremist group activities and his own acts among them.

Two Arrested for Importing Arms for Terrorists

NC0501142293 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1110 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Cairo, 5 Jan (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—Al-Minya investigators have arrested two people who import arms for terrorists in Asyut in an ambush on the desert road in al-Minya. The defendants were arrested carrying four machine guns, two pistols, and 35 spare parts for weapons found in their private car. The two defendants were referred to the prosecution, which has opened investigations.

Major General Ibrahim 'Ashrah, chief of al-Minya security, received secret information that Hasan Ahmad Mustafa and Mahmud Sulayman, farmers from Imbabah, intended to smuggle arms to the terrorists in Asyut. Investigations revealed that the defendants escaped from Imbabah and are arms traders. They have previously been accused in seven cases of trading in smuggled arms.

Libya

Foreign Minister Meets With Tunisian Counterpart

LD0601112093 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0925 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Tripoli, 6 Jan (JANA)—The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation this morning met in Tripoli with Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia, who is currently visiting the Great Jamahiriyah.

The meeting examined how to consolidate and develop the fraternal relations and cooperation between the sons of the single Arab people in the Great Jamahiriyah and in Tunisia.

The meeting was attended by the brother secretary of the General People's Committee (?for unity) and the general commissioner of the Great Jamahiriyah in sisterly Tunisia.

Relations With Sudan Seen as 'Deteriorated'

NC0601081593 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 30 Dec 92 p 6

[Text] Libyan authorities have arrested Banghazi University student Tawfiq 'Abd-al-Majid on a charge that he is the link between Sudan's [Islamic] Front party and fundamentalist groups in Libya.

Libyan-Sudanese relations deteriorated sharply after the Front intensified its activities among Islamic movements in Libya. Informed sources asserted that the Front's government backs these movements as the alternative power in Libya should Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's regime fall. The sources added that the assistant Sudanese consul in Tripoli is in charge of this support.

Sudanese Ambassador to Libya 'Abbas al-Nur has already admitted that relations between the two countries have deteriorated. He said Western countries asked the Libyan Government to stop dealing with Sudan as a condition for resolving the differences between Washington and Tripoli.

Mauritania

Decree Issued on New Cabinet Appointments

LD0301220893 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic 2030 GMT 3 Jan 93

[Text] The President's Office has announced that, in accordance with a decree issued today, the following appointments have been made:

Interior, post, and telecommunications minister: Lamrabott Sidi Mohmoud Ould Cheikh Ahmed;

Fisheries and maritime economy minister: Abdallahi Ould Abdi;
Commerce, handicrafts, and industry: Jagana Moussa;
Mines and industry minister: Sidi Mohamed Ould Mohamed Fall;
Rural development and environment minister: Mouloud Ould Sidi Abdallah;
Health and social affairs minister: Ahmed Ould Ghanahallah;
Culture and Islamic orientation minister: (Limam Ould Tagaddi);
Contacts and relations with parliament minister: Rachid Ould Saleh;
Secretary of state in charge of civil affairs: Khattar Ould Cheikh Ahmed.

Tunisian Minister Delivers Message to President

AB0501200593 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in French 1930 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Mr. Abdelaziz Ben Dhia, Tunisian minister of defense, arrived in Nouakchott this afternoon with a special message from President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, president of the Republic. The Tunisian emissary was welcomed at the airport by Colonel Ahmed Ould Minnih, minister of defense, and His Excellency, Mr. Mohamed H'Sairi, Tunisian ambassador to Mauritania.

Sudan

Another PLO-Hamas Meeting To Be Held 'Soon'

EA0501204593 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1515 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Khartoum, 5 Jan (SUNA)—Dr. Abdullah al-Turabi, the secretary-general of the Arab and Islamic People's Conference, has said that the idea of Hamas joining the PLO was discussed at the meeting which ended in Khartoum yesterday.

Al-Turabi told the newspaper AL-INQADH AL-WATANI that the question of Hamas joining the PLO was no more than a procedural matter. He said that another meeting between Hamas and the PLO would be held soon in Khartoum in order to define the modalities of their coming together.

Dr. al-Turabi revealed that the two sides defined their points of differences and agreements. He said that the differences were confined to the two groups' perception of the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Iraqi Prime Minister Hails Sudan's Support

EA0601112693 Khartoum SUNA in English 1700 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, 5 Jan (SUNA)—Member of the Iraqi RCC [Revolution Command Council] and prime minister, Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi has hailed progress of the Sudanese-Iraqi relations, describing the bilateral ties between the two countries as solid since before the heinous imperialist aggression on Iraq.

Interviewed by the general manager of the SUDAN NEWS AGENCY (SUNA), al-Tayyib Mustafa, who visited Iraq recently, Premier Zubaydi stated that Iraq is fully aware of the conditions being surpassed by the Sudan and the conspiracies waged against it. He praised the Sudan for its stances in support of Iraq, saying that the Iraqis will never forget that a Sudanese plane carrying meat shipment for them was the first flight to enter Iraq following imposition of the blockade.

Zubaydi said that the imperialist [campaign against] the Sudan came in retaliation for the solid stances that the country adopts toward the defence of Arab and Islamic causes.

Speaking on the recent talks between the Sudan and Iraq in Baghdad, Zubaydi explained that both sides had agreed on working out joint future strategic plans in the fields of agriculture, industry, housing, development and oil. He said that the Iraqi companies were directed to operate in different fields in the Sudan, adding that aspects of bilateral cooperation are witnessing rapid increase. He referred to visits by Sudanese agricultural and housing delegations to Iraq in the context of exchange of experiences and training.

The Iraqi premier has expressed satisfaction over Sudan's success to realise self-sufficiency in grains production, saying that an Iraqi delegation was sent to Sudan so as to get acquainted on Sudan's experiment in this regard. He emphasised importance of exchanging experiences and mutual cooperation between the sister countries.

Governor Denies Political Detainees in State

EA0601112293 Khartoum SUNA in English 1652 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Khartoum, 5 Jan (SUNA)—The Upper Nile State wali [governor] Brig (police) Bol Reth Kuany, has denied presence of any political detainee in the prisons of his state, saying that there was no human rights violation practices in the state during the foiled attack of the Kujur [witch doctor] forces on Malakal town recently [in October 1992].

Some measures taken against a number of people by the government came in the context of confronting the said attempt, Brig Kuany said, affirming that all those who were put under preventive detention in connection with the incident are now released. No one of them was tried. Brig Kuany added, saying that the hostile mass media campaign on human rights violations in the state aimed at distorting the image of Sudan in the framework of the foreign mass media campaign against the Sudan and for the benefit of the outlaws movement [Sudanese People's Liberation Army].

On security situation in the state, Brig Kuany affirmed stability of the situation, pointing to the recent conference of walis there as evidence for that.

Anyanya-II Forces in Malakal Disbanded

AB0601105193 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1520 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Khartoum, 5 Jan (SUNA)—The governor of Upper Nile State, Brigadier Kuany, has announced that Anyanya-II forces [progovernment militia] in Malakal have been officially disbanded following confirmation that these forces were involved in the attack mounted by the Kujur [witch doctor] forces against Malakal recently [in October 1992]. Kuany said in a news conference held on 5 January that the objective of the Kujur forces had been to plunder and loot the town of Malakal. The rebel forces [Sudanese People's Liberation Army, SPLA], particularly the Nasir faction, exploited the raid for military and propaganda purposes in the area.

The governor of Upper Nile State said that Riak Machar [leader of the SPLA's Nasir faction] had attempted to exploit the citizens' support for the Kujur because of their belief in the Kujur's spiritual powers. Machar wanted to attract the Kujur and its supporters to engage in military operations due to the Nasir wing's enormous manpower losses. At the same time he wanted to derive propaganda benefits from the raid.

His Excellency added that the vigilance of the Armed Forces, the People's Defense Forces, and the united internal front of the citizens of the state, and particularly of Malakal citizens, had frustrated the attackers and led to the nullification of the Kujur's claims [about their spiritual powers]. This also led to the people turning against the Kujur and the surrender of over 1,000 men from the rebel forces with all their equipment to the Armed Forces following the failure of the raid.

Speaker on Hala'ib Dispute, APU Meetings

JN0501111293 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 5 Jan 93 p 5

[Interview with Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, speaker of the Sudanese Transitional National Assembly, by 'Abd-al-Khaliq al-Mumani in Amman; date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Al-Mumani] Are you satisfied with the results of the meetings held by Arab parliamentary groups in Amman?

[Khalifah] Yes. We are grateful to the Jordanian parliamentary group for the invitation to an emergency session of the Arab Parliamentary Union [APU] to discuss this crucial issue (the deportees issue), about which we are extremely concerned, particularly since the Israeli occupation authorities deported these honorable persons from their homeland and national soil. The new develpment, as far as inter-Arab meetings are concerned, was the fraternal atmosphere which permeated the APU meetings. There was an identity of views among the fraternal delegations. Indeed, there were no differences at all among them. [passage omitted]

[Al-Mumani] What about the Arab countries which boycotted the emergency meeting?

[Khalifah] We deem acceptable the excuses for not attending the APU meetings advanced by some countries such as Djibouti, which went through presidential elections, as well as Mauritania and Morocco. However, we have failed to find any excuse for the boycott of the meetings by the elected Kuwaiti National Council, particularly since parliamentarians must voice the people's sentiments if they are to remain honest to their constituencies. As regards other Arab countries, they do not have parliaments. Consequently, they could not have attended the APU meetings. Nevertheless, I urge all Arabs to close their ranks, which could not be considered a controversial issue. Whoever considers the closing of ranks a controversial issue cannot be considered one of us. [passage omitted]

[Al-Mumani] Are you coming under any pressure because of the meat shipments you have been sending to Iraq?

[Khalifah] The pressures we are facing at present are confined to the media sphere. However, what we are engaged in right now is actually in implementation of a decision made by the UN Sanctions Commission. Sudan has not violated international resolutions. It is committed to their implementation. Sudanese aircraft continue to ship meat to the fraternal Iraqis because we obtained the approval of the Sanctions Commission in this regard. [passage omitted]

[Al-Mumani] What about the developments of the Sudanese-Egyptian dispute over the Hala'ib area?

[Khalifah] Sudanese-Egyptian ties are not fraternal. The Egyptians are not according Sudan the treatment usually accorded to brothers. This is a discordant note in the history of the usually harmonious Sudanese-Egyptian ties. We and the Egyptians have set up a joint committee to safeguard relations. We do not want the situation to worsen, because we do not want Zionist and Western policies, which are hostile to Sudan, to succeed, as this would lead to infighting between brothers in Sudan and Egypt (the people who have always cherished the unity of the Nile Valley). However, to be completely honest with you, the escalation on the part of the Egyptian brothers is saddening. It appears that the Egyptians are indifferent to the repercussions of this issue. What is currently taking place in Hala'ib violates all norms, charters, treaties, as well as the fraternal sentiments harbored by the fraternal Sudanese and Egyptian peoples. We hope that this issue will be left to the Sudanese-Egyptian joint committee to handle. In case this committee fails to handle it, we will ask regional organizations to debate it. And, if we fail to agree on a solution to this dispute through the good offices of regional organizations, we will then seek the arbitration of the International Court of Justice. All this is meant to be achieved through negotiations and dialogue. We asked the Egyptian brothers to accord us the treatment they accorded Israel when the Tabah issue was negotiated. The negotiations over Tabah continued for 10 years. Why cannot this be observed in their talks with their Sudanese brothers? We are willing to continue the negotiations with them. We in Sudan are careful not to respond to provocations and escalation by the Egyptian political leadership, because we do not want to be responsible for the shedding of Arab blood, and also because we want to safeguard good neighborliness. This is dictated by our religion and code of ethics. God willing, we will show patience and consult with our Arab brothers, because right is on our side. We hope that this issue will be resolved within the Arab context, and that there will be no justification for the dispatch of international troops to the area, as happened in the Arabian Gulf and Somalia. I cannot imagine how we could allow foreign powers to interfere with our own affairs. [passage omitted]

Al-Bashir Warned of 'Popular Revolt' Threat

NC0601075593 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 30 Dec 92 p 6

[Report by Jihad al-Fikki]

[Excerpt] Following demonstrations in several cities against steep price rises and shortages, al-Turabi's Islamic Front government canceled a deal to export 50,000 tons of sugar so that it could be distributed to citizens suffering an acute shortage of this strategic commodity.

The measure was taken after tumultuous mass demonstrations erupted in al-Abyad, 'Atbarah, al-Fashir, Tiyala, al-Qadarif, Kassala, and Omdurman. Another reason behind the measure was increasing discontent among Armed Forces officers and soldiers and their complaints about price rises and living conditions.

Sudanese markets have suffered a shortage of sugar for over a month, since prices shot up as the dollar rate rose to 190 pounds and customs and tariffs were increased.

AL-WAFD has learned that Brigadier General 'Umar al-Bashir [title as published] received security reports warning of the consequences of increased prices and the scarcity of necessary commodities and of the citizens' discontent and anger, which they expressed in demonstrations. The reports warned that this could escalate into a popular revolt capable of creating a complete change, particularly with all the factors for this popular revolt already in existence. [passage omitted]

Students Protest Takeover of Egyptian Schools

NC0501160693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1332 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Excerpt] Khartoum, 5 Jan (MENA)—A large number of Sudanese students from the Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir Secondary School and the Coptic College, both of which are run by the Egyptian educational mission, demonstrated in front of the mission building today and marched to show their rejection of the Sudanese Education Ministry's decision to take over the Egyptian mission schools.

The demonstration was staged while a meeting was being held between the director of the education department in Khartoum and Muhammad Nur, head of the Egyptian educational mission in Sudan, to discuss issues related to Khartoum's takeover of the Egyptian schools in the Khartoum Governorate. [passage omitted]

Kuwait

Prime Minister Meets Arab League Secretary General

LD0601114293 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0951 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Kuwait, 6 Jan (KUNA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid met here this morning with Shaykh Sa'ad al-Abdullah al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister.

The meeting dealt with the issue of the Kuwaiti and other POW's detained by the Iraqi regime, and with the Arab and international efforts exerted to put an end to this tragedy.

Government Economic Mismanagement Criticized

LD0501193693 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1551 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 5 January (KUNA)—The executive and legislative authorities today agreed in principle on a draft law to protect public funds, which was prepared by the legislative and legal affairs committee.

The National Assembly held an ordinary meeting today under the chairmanship of Speaker Ahmad al-Sa'dun, and in the presence of Heir Apparent and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'ad al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah. The meeting postponed full adoption of the draft law so as to add a few amendments that are likely to reinforce and strengthen it. [passage omitted]

Deputies criticized the government for its policy in managing and investing public funds, holding it responsible for the squandering of public funds and for the excesses and embezzlements committed by the knights of investment [as received] abroad while the government was seeing and hearing but not lifting a finger. The deputies considered the silence of the government at the excesses and embezzlements regarding the money for investment abroad as protection for those who were trifling with the money.

The deputies urged the Kuwaiti people to take a serious and historic stand to save the Kuwaiti economy, which is threatened with collapse. Dr Ismail al-Shatti, chairman of the financial and economic committee at the assembly, said that Kuwait is on the eve of economic scarcity, according to the appalling data and figures available to the committee.

Dr al-Shatti further said: "There is no money in Kuwait, and the deficit of the general budget of the state will continue for the next five years at an average of 1 billion dinars a year, in addition to the schedule of obligations, and the foreign debts and their interest."

He also said: "The Ministry of Finance is incapable of laying down a financial strategy liable to ensure the promoting of national economy."

Qatar

Minister Meets Palestinian Spokesperson 'Ashrawi

JN0401153493 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1330 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Doha, 4 Jan (WAKH)—Qatari Interior Minister Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Khalifah Al Thani today met with Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesperson for the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations, who is currently visiting Doha.

They reviewed the latest developments of the Palestine question, the peace negotiations, and Israel's arbitrary measures against Palestinian citizens, including deporting them from their homeland.

Saudi Arabia

King Addresses Cabinet After Budget Approval

LD0401201693 Riyadh SPA in English 1939 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Riyadh, Jan 4, SPA—The Council of Ministers at its session here today under the chairmanship of custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin'-Abd-al-'Aziz approved the Kingdom's general budget for the fiscal year 1413/1414. [2 July 1992-21 June 1993]

Speaking on the occasion the monarch reiterated the keenness of the state to provide the citizens with all possible facilities and said "in the name of God, most gracious, most merciful" thanks to the Almighty God who has honored us with Islam and enabled us to abide by its teachings and follow the Sharia law in our heavenly and worldly affairs".

"Thanks to the Almighty God who has bestowed on our dear country stability, prosperity, security and peace and honored us with the service of the two holy mosques and the pilgrims".

"My brothers and sisters:

peace be upon you:

I would like to announce on this blessed day the budget of the new fiscal year, and pray to the God to make it a year of bounties and development for the sons of this country who have been working collectively, depending on the God, to accomplish the achievements which speak for themselves."

"The estimated sum for the expenditures of the new budget will be about SR [Saudi rial] 196.9 billion. This figure marks an increase of nearly nine percent compared to the budget of the last year.

"This is in addition to the sums due to be spent by the development funds as loans for the implementation of housing, industrial and agricultural projects.

"Work is underway, and will continue during this year, to implement 7400 projects in the various spheres."

"Our basic target which we give top priority is: Development, raising the standard of living, and building of utilities and promotion of public services.

"In addition to that it is necessary to enhance the capabilities of our Armed Forces because the situation in our region requires such enhancement.

"We hope that stability will prevail in the region so that each country will devote its efforts for the development of its economy and ensuring the prosperity of its people.

"We do appreciate the current trend of the citizens to invest in the field of productive projects. We call on our citizens to go ahead in this direction within the framework of the support being provided by the state.

"We pray to the Almighty God to perpetuate his bounties on us and enable us to do things that may please him.

Peace be upon you."

United Arab Emirates

Russia's Grachev Cuts Visit To Attend Funeral

JN0401154693 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1410 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 4 Jan (WAKH)—Russian Defense Minister General Pavel Grachev has cut short his current visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE] to return to Moscow later today to take part in his father's funeral there.

The KUWAITI NEWS AGENCY said that Gen. Grachev, who arrived in Abu Dhabi on a three-day official visit yesterday, received the news of his father's death this morning.

The Russian defense minister met earlier today with UAE President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, with whom he reviewed relations of cooperation and friendship and ways of boosting them.

Gen. Grachev also met today with UAE Defense Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Rashid Al Maktum, with whom he discussed some military topics of joint interest.

The Russian defense minister was scheduled to leave for Kuwait tomorrow to prepare for the signing of an intended military agreement between Russia and Kuwait. He was also scheduled to hold talks with Kuwaiti military officials on bilateral military cooperation.

KUNA cited a diplomatic source at the Russian embassy in Abu Dhabi as saying that Air Force Commander Prod Mikov [name as received], who is accompanying the Russian defense minister on his current visit, will head his country's delegation instead of Gen. Grachev during the delegation's visit to Kuwait, which will begin tomorrow evening.

Yemen

'Fundamentalists' Arrested in Bombing Incidents

NC0501185193 Paris AFP in English 1753 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Aden, Jan 5 (AFP)—Thirty-six suspected Muslim fundamentalists have been arrested in connection with bombings last week at two hotels in this southern Yemeni port city, an informed Yemeni source told AFP Tuesday.

The source, who requested anonymity, said the 36 were suspected of belonging to the "Yemeni branch of the Islamic Jihad," a name used by pro-Iranian fundamentalist groups in several Arab countries.

An Austrian and a Yemeni died in the attacks on the Aden and Goldmore Hotels, although some 100 U.S. soldiers travelling to Somalia and staying at the Aden Hotel were unharmed. U.S. soldiers had left the Goldmore Hotel days before the bombing.

Yemeni police said the assailants struck the hotels because they served alcohol—not because U.S. soldiers frequented them.

Informed sources also said Yemeni police backed by soldiers were in a stand-off with 50 armed fundamentalists implicated in the Aden attacks in the al-Maraqshah region of central Abyan province.

Minister Says Army Ready To 'Liberate' North, South

NC0601080593 Paris AFP in English 0759 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 6 (AFP)—The Iraqi army is ready to "liberate" areas of the north and south of the country that the government no longer controls, Defence Minister 'Ali Hasan al-Majid said Wednesday.

The allies have imposed U.N.-backed air exclusion zones in the Kurdish north and Shiite south to protect the local populations.

Majid said the army had recovered from the Gulf war and "is ready to liberate the territories of the north and the far south."

Saddam Addresses Nation on Army Day

JN0601103693 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 0804 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Speech by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn on the 72d anniversary of the Iraqi Army on 6 January—live or recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Faithful sons of our glorious Arab nation, great people, and all those who believe in the mission of justice, wherever you may be. O great army, the elite of the men of the nation and those who will take it on the road to loftiness to become the nation's fluttering banner on the road to faith, justice, and equity, and to express the essence of the first march with its faith when the messengers and prophets at the time conveyed God's principles to mankind in God's vast land.

O glorious Iraqis, greetings. We celebrate 6 January every year to remind us of what we cannot forget. We have made it the title of all our pride and quest for security after God Almighty has venerated such a day by bestowing blessings on those who live a life full of glory and which in itself is the first step to Heaven and by blessing the martyrs who are watching how we perform on the road to the principles of faith so that they may be our witness before God.

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Thus have we made of you an Ummat justly balanced, that you might witness over the nations, and the Apostle a witness over yourselves; and We appointed the Qibla to which thou was used, only to test those who followed the Apostle from those who would turn on their heels from the faith. Indeed it was a change momentous, except to those guided by God. And never would God make your faith of no effect. For God is to all people most surely full of kindness, most merciful. [Koranic verses]

It is a day whose meanings resound throughout the world after man alone had been emphasizing these meanings in the past. These meanings now represent the highest values, which are being recalled by the faithful within their national borders, and even outside these borders.

The 6th of January for the individual in every place is the day of the birth of the seed of resistance, the beginning of the story which narrates how mankind had confronted oppressors, corrupters, the ungrateful, and the traitors at the turn of 20th century and transformed this seed of resistance into a tree which became impregnable to the lances and swords. This was after faith became deeply embedded in the conscience of the people who participated in the great Mother of Battles in epical fighting against oppression and corruption, which became embodied in the aggression by more than 30 countries. Thus, the 6th of January is no longer the day of the sound national and pan-Arab seed only, but it is also the day of the seed which grew into a tree which God Almighty had wished to honor in its [the army] sacrifices along the path of right, thus honoring its history as well as the history of the Arab nation and entire human race and those who continued to carry out part of the jihad spirit that was upheld by Prophet Muhammad, may God's peace and mercy be upon him, who was the last of the prophets. Thus, came your march, O brave men in the glorious second al-Qadisiyah [Iran-Iraq war] and in the immortal Mother of Battles [Gulf war]. This march is best remembered by its sublime meanings of faith, zeal, and just rejection. With it, we restore the most profound faith after the apostles and the prophets had disappeared and through which we reaffirm our commitment to God and to what we have pledged toward ourselves, and through which we recall the highest meanings that we should remember about mankind and about our commitment to it.

When contemplating the living components and tangible results of this march, let us remember the value of the honorable stand and the committed decision toward our people and homeland and toward our great nation and all mankind.

Brethren, the past year was a year of work in all domains, including the domain of the Armed Forces. We will continue to remember that year for the glory it forged for our Armed Forces, represented by the efforts to prepare the requisites of what is dictated on the level of preparations, preparedness, and equipment. There came into existence what you know about and that which is on its way for you to become acquainted with. All of it is a source of pride for the nation and the people. In doing all this, we always sought help from Almighty God. Whenever we made up our mind to make the first step, depending on God, everything became possible or was on its way to being so. Thus, God has honored us all. It suffices that Almighty God has honored us, before and regardless of anything else, with great faith and constant certainty that everything is possible following the faithful decision, and that every occurrence, regardless of its form or influence, bears good. We thank God for it. If it emerged to those who do not get to the bottom of things that it was evil or hateful, say it is all from God.

O believers among our glorious Arab nation, O Muslim believers, O dear friends: When memory announces the birth of a faithful army in Iraq, the country of the two great rivers, the first thing that comes to mind about the characteristics of this heroic army is its great role in the major historic battle of this age, the immortal Mother of Battles. Some may become amazed and demand an answer to the question: How did this army manage to fight against 28 armies and more than 33 states? In order for you to know the most correct way to answer this question with the greatest possible accuracy, we remind you that the seed of this army can be dated back to the first stages of human civilization in this ancient country. There was an organized army that was based on the principle of voluntary service; that was housed and trained in specialized camps; that was commanded by the then city ruler himself; that comprised officers and soldiers; that was divided into groups and formations; that possessed the various types of weapons and services, including the assault vehicles, which acted like armor, as well as spears, arrows, bayonets, and swords. The forefathers in Iraq possessed such an army, which was developed according to the criteria of that time, in the year 3000 B.C., that is about 5,000 years ago. The age and role of any person or army are an accumulative experience that expands and grows according to their time span and deepens according to the type of mission entrusted to them, and the army of Iraq is part of the Iraqi people who saw the first seed of human civilization on their land thanks to their thinking and effort. Historians and archeologists indisputably agree to the emergence of this civilization in Iraq to 6000 B.C.

Hence, the age of this army, the capacity of its endurance, and its preparedness to perform a major role must necessarily interact with the depth of this history and the type of the civilized role performed by the people of Iraq and the tasks they carried out within the framework of their pan-Arab and humanitarian interaction throughout all stages of time.

Thus, whenever the army plays an honorable role, it in fact represents the people of Iraq and a picture of their shining image.

Regardless of this past and its effect, we know that the role of an individual, a community, and institutions will be in accordance with the mission to be performed. The greater the task the greater will be the role, act, and effect of people, communities, and armies. And because we are believers, we are aware that there is no task, no role, and no effect greater than the ones performed by the believers in Almighty God, whether as individuals or as groups, when they defend their faith and sanctities. What will it be like when all this interacts with a pioneer role which aims at liberating the Arab people through reviving the role and message of the Arab nation? All effects of injustice, enslavement, corruption, and weakness will disappear in front of the honest and faithful jihad of the nation.

Since the faithful army is the vanguard of the faithful people in the steadfastness before the attacks of the enemies—the renegades, traitors, and agents—the confrontation during the Mother of Battles revived this vigor and readiness among the great and faithful people of Iraq and in the ranks of its valiant army, the militant army of the nation. We take pride in the stands of the army of the Mother of Battles and al-Qadisiyah, not out of a desire to compete with anybody, but in the service of faith and believers and in the service of the friends of people and humanity advocates. We are also proud of this army's performance of its pan-Arab role in Sinai, when its planes were among the first in the first attack on missiles and artillery positions of the Zionist enemy which occupied the eastern side of the Suez Canal.

The armored infantry, infantry, and mechanized infantry of our brave army launched well-known battles in 1973 when they checked the advance of the enemy toward dear Damascus. Nobody will forget the pan-Arab role assumed by our army before 1973 in confronting the Zionist schemes and occupation of Palestine in 1948 and the other honorable pan-Arab roles.

Proceeding from all this, and in light of this shining history, there is still great hope in the readiness of this faithful army and in its continuous capability of endurance and confrontation to be on the level of the tasks entrusted to it in defense of right, homeland, and nation.

O God, protect our army; have mercy on our martyrs; and lead our army on the path of justice and lofty objectives to please You and for the pride of mankind.

O brothers: Is there in the whole world a glory or a distinguished faith like the glory and faith of the faithful and mujahid army of our nation, the army of great Iraq? If anybody wants to have a correct answer he should ask the question as follows: Has God honored an army as He honored this great army when it stood in the arena of confrontation in the face of the forces, influence, money, and armies of 33 states representing falsehood, while this army stood alone on the other side representing justice. This army stood firm and proud after relying on God, motivated by the faith and history of its glorious nation and supported by the calls and prayers of the advocates of justice in its nation and in the world.

God has thus honored it and disgraced the will of evil in the armies of the tyrants. Can there be stronger and clearer evidence to demonstrate the result of this equation and to prove that God Almighty has taken care of Iraq's Army and people in such a duel after He has found them believing in what He has wished for them? Has there ever been a question that applied, or can be applied, both in the past and the present, to any army as it has applied to, and applies to the Army of Iraq? Is this not the greatest degree of glory that emanates from the faith; a glory that can be maintained through additional faith and further adherence to the principles and slogans of the Mother of Battles and the national, pan-Arab, and humanitarian role played by the people and army of Iraq.

O God, protect our Army and ease its task. God, grant our martyrs paradise. God, guide that Army on the right path and grant it, in addition to the great faith, an unextinguishable and undying glory. Amen!

Glorious men and women; stalwart men in the valiant Armed Forces, the shield of the people and nation: It is rare to see any army in the world that befits the description of an army with a mission. With the exception of the armies of prophets, the Iraqi Army is an army with a mission. It is truly an army with a mission and has always been the loftiest standard carried by that mission in its march. It has never been used, like other armies, to serve immediate policies. It was never manipulated by the foreigner even at the time when the government's policy in Iraq was subservient to the foreigner. But, rather, it has always played its role to illustrate the deep-established values of its nation and people, both in submission and rejection. That army has always reflected the will of the nation and people, in peace as well as in war. And, taken as a whole, it has always represented good against evil, justice against injustice.

The Army has always followed these principles from the day the first fruit of virtue blossomed when, from the darkness of the night a new light emerged; when the first battalion, the blessed nucleus, the Musa al-Kazim battalion was established on 6 January 1921. It fought the battles of the nation and people: In May 1941 against deviation and subservience; in 1948 against the seeds of evil that usurped the dear land of Palestine; in 1958 when it overthrew the agent, corrupt regime; in 1963 when it toppled the dictatorial, anti-Arab regime; and in 1968 when the people, led by the Ba'th Party, decided to establish their own fortress and realize their ambition within a great historical framework. Then came the other honorable stands taken by our Army when it confronted the evil that originated from Tehran in the Arab's second glorious Qadisiyah, and then when it spearheaded faith in the confrontation against corruption, treason, treachery, injustice, and deviation on the international arena in the immortal Mother of Battles.

The great, loyal army of our nation has not deviated from its role as a sincere representative of the will of the people and nation. It never complained or felt overburdened by any decision that reflected the will of justice, the people, and the nation. Nor did it fall victim to any seduction or accept an evil deed, which might tarnish its honorable history.

O Brothers, perhaps you recall how the enemies exhausted themselves with unjust statements during the Mother of Battles, even after the cease-fire, in which they were urging our great army to disavow their history and people, searching for an object of treachery and offering various technical temptations. Perhaps, this fact, at the time, may have had a negative impact on the morale of those who do not know, very well, the nature of our great Army. We have known this faithful, unwavering, and great Army ever since we fought with our weapons as part of the party and army in 1959. The Ba'th Party fought with this army in 1963 and were determined to fight with it in 1964, and we fought with it in July 1968. We also fought with it during the second al-Qadisiyah for eight years until God honored our struggling army and people on the day of days in August 1988 with a clear victory. We also fought with this army in the battle of rejection and confrontation against infidelity and falsehood in the immortal Mother of Battles. We know our own Army as the army of faith, not deviation; the army of loyalty and certainty, not the army of treachery; the army of the homeland and patriotism, not the army of the foreigner; the army of the nation, not the army of lackeys. Our faith in this army is as established as our faith in God and we know that our Army supports us, belongs to us, and stands to our side. It is not standing in another trench. It is with its people, its nation, and the principle of the established Ba'th Party. The enemies also discovered this fact later. Their disappointment has crushed the remnants of the base hope which they had pinned, in vain, on those whom they thought they can manipulate as they had manipulated other armies after they had manipulated the political leaders of these armies, who gave in to their evil will, and after these armies had lost the role of great strugglers. This is because armies reflect, in one way or the other, the faces of those leading them and the type of message these armies are carrying, the position they are occupying, and the mission entrusted to them.

The Army of Iraq is truly the army of the nation. It is the army of faith, protection, and glory. It is the sword which the enemies made more trenchant, solid, and capable to act in the right direction. This is the army of the May 1941 Revolution; the army of July, the army of Ramadan, the army of al-Qadisiyah, and the army of the Mother of Battles.

Peace be with our martyrs in heaven. Peace be with our great Army, which has recorded feats in the annals of history and portrayed the most brilliant national, pan-Arab, and humanitarian images. Peace be with you O righteous, brave men. Greeting to you, on your day and the month of the birth, the march, and decision. Peace be upon your families. Peace be with your faithful, alert weapon. Peace be with humanity on your great day. Peace be with our faithful nation and its eternal mission. Greetings to Palestine. May you live for it and may Palestine live. May you and Palestine live. Greetings to the immortal Mother of Battles and the climax of the faithful action in it in the present and future. Greetings to the second glorious al-Qadisiyah. Greetings to the people of Iraq. Greetings to the people of Iraq. Greetings to the people of Iraq. Greetings to the faith in their hearts and minds. Greetings to their conscience, which will never die, with God's help.

God is great. God is great. Accursed be the lowly.

'Aziz Interviewed on Bilateral Relations With Turkey

TA0501152393 Ankara Show Television in Turkish 2020 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Interview with Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz by Mithat Bereket in Baghdad for the "32d Day" program; date not given—recorded, in English with superimposed Turkish translation]

[Text] [Bereket] The recent course of Turkish-Iraqi relations could be likened to a strange love story. Both sides state that they want to start relations as soon as possible. Everyone is speaking a great deal, but there are no results yet. What is the real reason for this impasse?

['Aziz] The only obstacle between us and Turkey is the UN embargo. We are calling on Turkey, and they, in turn, say that they want to conduct business with us; but the embargo is holding them back. We expect Turkey to help us in lifting this embargo, because the embargo has not resolved anything. On the contrary, it harms everyone. Turkey, however, is subject to various pressures and we understand this.

[Bereket] What concrete proposals did you submit to Ankara in a bid to overcome these obstacles in the relations?

['Aziz] Above all, Turkey should help us in lifting the embargo, because this embargo harms not only Iraq, but all the regional countries, especially Turkey. We informed the Turkish Government that we are ready to send a delegation, which will include myself, to Ankara. They said you are welcome; but we are still waiting. The ball is now in Ankara's court.

[Bereket] Were you in any way disturbed by the Turkish military operation in northern Iraq?

['Aziz] Technically, I cannot make any comment on the operation conducted by the Turkish Army, because I do not have sufficient information on the subject. In my opinion, however, Turkey's attitude shows bewilderment and confusion.

[Bereket] What sort of confusion do you mean?

['Aziz] In my opinion, it has now become clear how wrong it was for Turkey to rely on Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani.

[Bereket] They have now declared a federated state and they have a parliament.

['Aziz] This is nonsense. The Kurds cannot unilaterally decide on the nature of relations with the Iraqi Government. This is like marriage. You cannot say I married you without the consent of the other side. This is an extremely silly and meaningless attitude.

[Bereket] What they did is reminiscent of divorce, rather than marriage. Moreover, the West supports this move. What will you do now? Would you again consider military intervention?

['Aziz] We do not intend to resort to military solutions. This is a lie concocted to justify the presence of foreign forces in northern Iraq and Turkey. It is true that we used force in the past, but this was in self-defense against an armed rebellion. Now the same situation exists in Turkey. When you are attacked, you are obliged to defend yourselves, your army, and your public buildings.

Antiregime Attack in al-'Amarah Reported

NC0501172093 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] A unit from the opposition forces has attacked a regime's complex in the al-'Amarah Governorate. According to Iraqi opposition sources, the complex was destroyed and a number of government troops were killed in the attack. The sources added that the regime's security forces launched a large-scale arrest campaign in the populated areas near the complex in retaliation for the attack.

U.S. Charges on Technology Transfer to PRC Denied

TA0601093593 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 6 Jan 93 p 2

[Report by Washington correspondent Drora Perl]

[Text] CIA chief Robert Gates said in a meeting with THE WASHINGTON TIMES editorial staff two days ago that the PRC has acquired Patriot antimissile missile technology and that there is disagreement within the Bush administration on whether it was Israel that provided it to the PRC.

This was the first time the U.S. Administration publicly confirmed that the Chinese have the advanced technology of the Patriot missiles. Gates, who is due to end his term with the coming change of administration next month, refused to elaborate or say who the CIA believes provided the Chinese with the technology.

Gates said there are "disagreements on the question" of whether last April's State Department report, which cleared Israel of the charge of transferring the technology to the PRC, underestimated contradictory intelligence information.

When asked about this yesterday, Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval unequivocally said that innuendoes and allegations following the publication of the report by a committee that even visited Israel are baseless.

Prime Minister Plans February Visit to U.S.

TA0601074293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Studio discussion between moderator Shalom Qital and political correspondent Shlomo Raz—live]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Qital] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin plans to go to the United States in February to meet President Clinton. Does this mean that Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, who had planned to go, will be staying home?

[Raz] Correct. Foreign Minister Peres was scheduled to go in early February to participate in several events organized by Jewish groups. In the meantime, political meetings with the new U.S. Administration, which takes over in less than two weeks, are being coordinated. Prime Minister Rabin sent out signals that he wants to confer with President Clinton as soon as possible. Close aides to Peres said that under these circumstances—in which Prime Minister Rabin is going to the United States in early February—he will not be going.

[Qital] A completely different matter now: I understand that there are developments regarding Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein, who also heads the talks with the Palestinians.

[Raz] Yes, he will remain in his job after 15 January. That is the intention of the prime minister's bureau.

[Qital] He will stay on as head of the delegation or also as cabinet secretary?

[Raz] Both as cabinet secretary and as head of the delegation to the talks with Jordan and the Palestinians. I will remind you that his term has already been extended twice, each time for three months. He was cabinet secretary in Shamir's government and was asked to continue serving. It was decided that his term would be limited to three months, and it has now been extended for a third time. [passage omitted]

[Qital] Now to the Itamar Rabinovich affair: HA'ARETZ is carrying a front-page banner headline saying: "With the Prime Minister's Agreement, Itamar Rabinovich Paid a Ransom for Tax Offenses Instead of Being Tried. Rabinovich: I Have No Problem With Any Government Body." What do you know about that?

[Raz] I talked with Eytan Haber, director of the prime minister's bureau. He says the issue was brought to the prime minister's attention by Professor Rabinovich himself. I was told the move was made without Rabin's approval or disapproval but was simply brought to his attention. The prime minister did not become involved in the matter. Haber said the issue does not have any effect on Itamar Rabinovich's mission as Israeli ambassador to the United States.

Deputy Minister First to Visit

TA3112113392 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 31 Dec 92 p A3

[Report by political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin will travel to the United States in two weeks and will be the first senior government official to meet key figures in the Clinton administration.

Beilin was invited to lecture before Jewish organizations and will take the opportunity to hold farewell meetings with officials of the outgoing administration and get-acquainted meetings with Clinton men who were appointed to senior posts at the White House and the State Department.

In his meetings with the key officials of the new administration, the deputy foreign minister will brief them on the peace process and will discuss with them key issues on the U.S.-Israeli relations agenda.

Foreign Ministry Director General Yosef Hadas yesterday notified Malcolm Forbes, chairman of the VOA board of directors, that the Israeli Government is adhering to the agreement to set up a VOA relay station in the Jordan Rift Valley.

It has been learned that in the wake of an appeal by Zalman Shoval, Israel's ambassador to the United

States, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres held a discussion in which it was decided that the government will refrain from addressing the issue to avoid creating an internal argument between the project's supporters and opponents.

Several days ago, Ambassador Shoval asked the senior political echelon to advise him as soon as possible whether Israel is still interested in the project, because the decision on whether to set up the transmitters in Israel or in Kuwait is due to be made any day.

SLA Soldier Injured in Second Attack 5 Jan

TA0501134993 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] An SLA [South Lebanese Army] soldier was slightly injured this afternoon when terrorists fired shells at the central sector of the security zone in southern Lebanon. Our correspondent in the north Menahem Horowitz reports that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the SLA returned fire. This is the second time that terrorists have shelled targets in south Lebanon today.

State Adamant on Deportee Aid Despite UN Recommendation

TA0601053793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Excerpts] UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali is threatening to recommend that the Security Council impose further measures against Israel if Israel does not comply with the previous resolution on returning the Hamas deportees. Dr. Butrus-Ghali sent this message to the current Security Council president after hearing a report from his special envoy, James Jonah, that his mission to the Middle East had failed. [passage omitted]

This just in: Israel continues to stand by its position that it will not allow the passage of an aid convoy to the deportees unless Lebanon permits a similar supply convoy. Political sources made this statement to Qol Yisra'el in the wake of the criticisms voiced by the UN secretary general.

Ambassador Discusses 'Unacceptable' UN Note

TA0601071493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Telephone interview with Gad Ya'aqobi, Israeli ambassador to the United Nations, by correspondent Shalom Qital on 6 January—recorded]

[Text] [Qital] Is there a danger that the Security Council will impose sanctions on Israel?

[Ya'aqobi] It first must conform with the secretary general's letter, in which he says that if the mission of Ambassador Gharekhan—who arrives in Israel on 7 January—fails as Jonah's did, he proposes that the Security Council consider the possibility of additional measures. Therefore, the headlines are inaccurate for two reasons: First, he is not threatening but saying that this will happen only if the mission fails; second, he says that he will recommend that the Security Council consider additional measures but does not say what they are. Nevertheless, I definitely expressed reservations personally to Ambassador Gharekhan and in an announcement to the UN secretary general, who is in Cairo, saying that the remarks in the letter are unacceptable to us and, in our view, are not useful for dealing effectively with the issue for which the new envoy is being dispatched.

[Qital] It is true that there are a lot of ifs in the letter, but it is also true that there is a veiled threat.

[Ya'aqobi] There is definitely a veiled threat, and it is uncomfortable and, in my opinion, superfluous, because either he is dispatching an envoy in the belief that there is a chance of his producing positive results, in which case there is no need for a threat, or he is threatening, in which case I believe he should not send an emissary.

[Qital] In your view, what can the new envoy do which the previous one, Jonah, did not?

[Ya'aqobi] He is being dispatched with a Security Council mandate and under instructions from the UN secretary general. We see his mission as also to study the background and factors that preceded the resolution—in other words, Hamas and Islamic Jihad involvement in acts of murder and terrorism. He does not think so. We will receive the envoy because we are members of the United Nations, and we believe he must understand the circumstances and report them to the UN secretary general.

[Qital] About two weeks ago, before the affair began, I asked you if you feel any change in the relatively positive atmosphere toward Israel in the United Nations in recent months. Another two weeks have passed, and there is more perspective on the issue. Has there been a change?

[Ya'aqobi] In my view, the deportation issue is separate from the general process of Israeli-UN relations, which is basically positive and linked to the change in Israeli policy, the peace talks, and the fact that the Cold War is behind us. I believe that situation will return. There is no doubt that this affair has a negative impact on our relations with several UN members and creates tensions, although they are not too sharp. I want to tell you that two positive developments have taken place in the U.S. media and in UN circles: First, there is a far better and clearer understanding of the dangers of Islamic fundamentalism and Islamic terrorism in the territories and in neighboring Arab states, which, as is known, adopt very sharp measures against it; second is the fact that, contrary to fears, there is a commitment by Syria, Jordan, the Palestinians, and Lebanon to continue the peace talks, which improves the atmosphere a great deal. Nevertheless, it is a tough problem, and I hope that it will be dropped from the agenda when it is understood that Israel is fighting a legitimate war.

Arabs Urge UN To Halt Missions on Deportees

TA0601075493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Representatives of the Arab sector in Israel have called on the UN secretary general to stop sending envoys to the Middle East to deal with the issue of the deportees and instead to make sure that the Security Council resolution is implemented in full. Our correspondent Yo'el Dar reports that in a gathering held last night in the village of al-Tira in the Triangle, it was also decided to ask for a meeting with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to explain to him the Israeli Arabs' position on the matter.

Justice Minister Criticizes Deportation Decision

TA0501211593 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Excerpts] The deportation of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists was a grave step that opens the door for the future deportation of any person in the territories or inside Israel without warning and without giving them the benefit of a court hearing. Justice Minister David Liba'i explained that this lay behind his opposition to the government's decision on the deportations.

Our legal affairs correspondent Shlomo Arad interviewed the justice minister, who toured the settlement of Ari'el in Samaria today.

[Begin recording] [Arad] [passage omitted] After concluding his tour of Ari'el, the justice minister broke his silence on the issue of the deportations, and for the first time explained the reasons behind his opposition to the deportation of the Hamas activists.

[Liba'i] Look, the question is to what degree the principles of international law and the Geneva Convention were given sufficient consideration. These principles do not generally conform with the deportation of local residents from areas that are occupied territories. The High Court of Justice already ruled in the past that the authorities can deport residents of the territories. However, this is because when Israel entered the territories in 1967 it discovered that the emergency regulations from 1945 permit such deportations. This is true, but only on condition that any candidate for deportation is guaranteed the right to a court hearing first. The question now is whether the deportations are legal even though the Military Administration denied them the elementary right to be heard in court. What we should bear in mind is that although some people feel that the deportations were justified in this case, they have empowered the authorities in Israel to put people on buses or on a ship, whether inside Israel proper or in the territories, and deport them without even giving them the opportunity to explain in court whether it is really them or not, whether they have been properly identified, and whether there is any apparent basis for the suspicions against them or not. Now, all this can be checked later, after the deportation has already been effected. This is the question in principle, and that is what bothered and continues to bother those people who are expressing their doubts about this grave step.

That, however, was more of a theoretical explanation. As for the practical aspect, one must realize that the government made its decision on the basis of security needs. The decision was almost unanimous, and the government continues to uphold its decision.

[Arad] But there were always security needs. How do you explain the fact that two or three years ago, Dan Meridor and State Attorney Dorit Beinisch succeeded in preventing deportations, whereas this year, David Liba'i and Dorit Beinisch failed?

[Liba'i] Look, this is no secret. The question is at what stage the matter reaches the justice minister, the attorney general, and the state attorney. If preliminary consultations are held with us in the know and following developments, then obviously we have more influence on things. In light of the circumstances, in which the justice minister, state attorney, and even the attorney general first learned about the entire affair only just before the decision was made, then clearly our ability to influence things was very limited. I requested a postponement for additional clarifications, but this proved impossible. Therefore, under the circumstances that prevailed at the time, the cabinet made its decision, but it was against my opinion. [passage omitted]

Rabin on Capture of Hamas Squads, Deportation

TA0601144493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has said that the operations to uncover the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam terrorist squads lasted about a month and that not all the wanted men were captured. The fight against the hardcore and terrorist nucleus of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is being waged simultaneously, he added. Israel is determined to conduct negotiations on peace and at the same time fight terror—especially Islamic fanatic terror—to the bitter end.

Rabin reiterated that the 415 deportees would not be allowed to return to Israel. He added that, although he complied with the UN secretary general's request to accept another envoy on his behalf, this does not denote a change in his position with regard to the deportees.

The prime minister told our correspondent Shmu'el Tal that the only deportees who will be allowed to return to Israel are those who submit a personal petition to the appeals committees, and the latter grants their request to come back or to shorten their banishment.

Operations Detailed

TA0601122493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] The security forces have uncovered a number of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terrorist cells in the Hebron area. The hit squads were responsible for five shooting attacks against IDF [Israel Defense Forces] targets in which two soldiers were killed and six more wounded. Mark Weiss reporting:

The uncovering of the Hamas terror cells followed the wave of arrests last month, after the kidnapping of border policeman Nisim Toledano and the early arrest of a number of key cell members. So far, 22 members of the Hamas hit squads, known as 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam group, have been uncovered in the Hebron area. Some of the 22 are among those deported to south Lebanon, and the involvement of some of them was discovered only after their deportation.

The members of these 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam squads have so far admitted to the murder of Army reservist Shmu'el Geresh in Hebron and the attempted murder of a woman officer and a soldier who were shot at while traveling in an Army jeep on the outskirts of Hebron, which was fired at from a local vehicle. They are also suspected of the murder of other IDF soldiers. In all, the squads carried out five shooting attacks against IDF targets in the Hebron area as a result of which two soldiers were killed and six wounded, one critically. The identity of additional 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam suspects, residents of the Gaza Strip, is known to the security forces, and the search for these suspects is continuing.

Military sources this morning revealed details of how the Hamas terror cells operated in the Hebron area: The group would meet in mosques or in safe houses which they had rented to plan their attacks. Twenty-two-year-old 'Abbas Sha'bana acted as a coordinator between Hebron and Gaza. Sha'bana has smuggled tens of thousands of dollars from Gaza to Hebron to bankroll all the operations. Members of the group trained in the use of firearms in a cave near Hebron and purchased a car for use in their attacks.

Lebanese Organizations To Assimilate Deportees

TA0601141493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] In response to the High Court of Justice, the State Attorney's Office states that south Lebanese organizations are making preparations to help the deportees assimilate throughout Lebanon. The State Attorney's Office statement is based on an affidavit of an Intelligence Corps officer in the rank of brigadier general. The statement was a part of a High Court of Justice debate on the appeal by Knesset member 'Abd-al-Wahab Darawshah that the government allow the Red Cross to send a supply convoy to the deportees.

Our legal affairs correspondent Mira Amsalem adds that according to the statement, UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] and UNRWA [UN Relief and Works Agency] representatives regularly visit the deportees to reassure and help them. The visits are made under the supervision of the Lebanese Army.

The state repudiates the allegation that the deportees face mortal danger, noting that they receive regular supplies and that they have 10 physicians at their disposal.

[In a similar report, Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1330 GMT on 6 January cites the officer's affidavit to the effect that "the Intelligence Corps has received reports that eight deportees hospitalized in Lebanon had been sent by the Lebanese Army back to the encampment prior to the arrival of the UN envoy some 10 days ago."]

'Sources' Deny Secret Deal With Syria

TA0401160893 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Eldad Beck]

[Text] I wish there were secret channels of communication between Israel and Syria, is how a source involved in the political negotiations responded to charges by right-wing Knesset members and Golan Heights settlement leaders that Israel has reached a secret arrangement with Syria on a withdrawal from the plateau. There are no secret contacts between the two sides, another source stressed. The Syrians stick close to the framework of the official talks, and therefore no arrangement or agreement has so far been reached on a withdrawal.

Israel has lately heard positive declarations from the Syrian leadership, which indicate a readiness by Damascus to reach a political settlement, but the Syrians have still not made clear what they mean by the term peace, and as long as they do not do so, they will not hear anything about the scope of the withdrawal from the Golan Heights, and definitely not about a total withdrawal. The Israeli position on that was received with understanding by President-elect Bill Clinton. Nevertheless, the sources make it clear, we are drawing close to the decisive moment when Israel will have to give the Syrians clear answers, and the Syrians will not agree to less than the Egyptians received from us, or the others might get.

Minister Denies Golan Withdrawal Plan Considered

TA0501154093 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer today rejected Likud Knesset member [MK] Binyamin Netanyahu's allegations, according to which a plan for an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan

Heights already is being consolidated. At the same time, Ben-Eli'ezer does not rule out the possibility that Israeli settlements on the Golan Heights would stay there, even without IDF [Israel Defense Forces] protection, when a peace treaty is attained with the Syrians. Our correspondent Qobi Mandel heard Minister Ben-Eli'ezer:

[Begin recording] [Mandel] Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer today rejected the statement MK Binyamin Netanyahu had made, according to which a plan for a gradual Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights is being consolidated.

[Ben-Eli'ezer] It may well be that MK Netanyahu has started an additional career—making prophecies. I, as a member of the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs, am not familiar with such a plan.

[Mandel] Nevertheless, Minister Ben-Eli'ezer does not rule out the possibility that, in return for true peace, settlements would stay on the Golan Heights while the IDF is removed from there.

[Ben-Eli'ezer] There could be a situation in which Israeli settlements would stay on the Golan Heights, under Israeli rule, while the IDF gets off the plateau.

[Mandel] Regarding the deportation of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists, the construction and housing minister said that this step was the right one to make. [end recording]

Russia's Khasbulatov Arrives on Official Visit

TA0401055793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] The speaker of the Russian Parliament, Ruslan Khasbulatov, arrived last night in Israel for an official visit. He is the highest ranking Russian, as distinct from Soviet, official to visit Israel. Jack Katzenell reports:

Ruslan Imranovich Khasbulatov flew in from Jordan to Ben-Gurion Airport, and was welcomed by Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss. Khasbulatov said he hoped to play a part in Middle East peace process and to strengthen Moscow's political and economic relations with Israel.

Today he will meet President Hayim Herzog, and tomorrow Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. Khasbulatov and Shevah Weiss will establish Israel-Russian friendship societies in the Russian Parliament and the Knesset.

While Khasbulatov was in Amman, the spokesman of the delegation criticized Israel's expulsion of the 415 Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad activists as an unlawful step. However, Khasbulatov evaded reporters' questions on the subject when he landed at Ben-Gurion Airport.

Khasbulatov belongs to Russia's Chechen minority. He is a Muslim, and he will visit the two mosques on the Temple Mount. From Israel he will go on to Egypt.

Calls Peace Plan Worthy of Support

TA0401205393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Report by Karmit Gay]

[Text] Ruslan Khasbulatov, the speaker of the Russian Parliament, praised Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's initiative in the peace talks, and said that it was worthy of the support of all the parties. Khasbulatov was speaking at the inauguration of the Israeli-Russian parliamentary friendship society at the Knesset.

[Khasbulatov speaks in Russian, followed by Gay's translation] Khasbulatov stressed that the Russians were not here to lecture the Arabs on how to behave, but noted their concern over the protracted conflict in the Middle East, which could spread beyond the region. The opening session of the parliamentary friendship society was attended by its Israeli chairman, Refa'el Eytan, and another 18 Knesset members, as well as a large delegation from the Russian Parliament.

Peres on Khasbulatov Visit

TA0501212193 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Mikha'el Dana at the reception for Russian Parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem on 5 January—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Peres] We are very happy about this visit. First of all, Russia is still a large country and its parliament is a central institution. The parliament speaker is an important official, and the fact that he is a Muslim makes this visit very unique.

[Dana] Mr. Foreign Minister, do you regard the arrival of another UN envoy as a sign of progress in the deportees affair?

[Peres] I do not know if I would describe it as progress, but it is another attempt to extricate this affair from the tangle it has become.

[Dana] What are your assessments regarding the resumption of the peace talks in the shadow of the deportees affair?

[Peres] I hope that they will be resumed, and I consider this as our primary hope.

[Dana] Mr. Foreign Minister, do you see any connection between the murder of the Shin Bet agent on 3 January and the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] deportations?

[Peres] It is impossible to say. The murder is despicable and serious enough to stand on its own.

[Dana] Do you think they are responsible?

[Peres] Hamas? Yes.

Comments on Expulsions

TA0601060793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] The speaker of the Russian parliament, Ruslan Khasbulatov, has sharply criticized Israel's expulsion. He was speaking at a news conference at the conclusion of his visit to Israel. Jack Katzenell reports:

[Katzenell] I am opposed in principle to measures such as expulsion or repression, Ruslan Khasbulatov said. Speaking through an interpreter, he said: We in the Russian Federation have adopted a policy of solving domestic problems and disputes by negotiation. Even when a tragedy occurs, one does not have to take steps which will endanger the peace process.

Khasbulatov said the expulsion played into the hands of the extremists, who can now tell the moderate Palestinians: You are engaged in peace negotiations, and what have you got in return? Expulsions. Therefore, Khasbulatov said, I do not think the expulsions have contributed to the peace process. We in the Russian parliament have a profound appreciation of the Rabin government's policy of negotiation and substantive concessions, but we do not think the expulsions promoted that policy.

On the other hand, Khasbulatov said his attitude to Islamic fundamentalism is most negative. The Russian Federation and its constituent republics had democratic secular states, Khasbulatov said; of course, one should help the Christian church and the other religions which suffered under the Communist regime, but to put religion into the basis of the state is quite another matter.

Khasbulatov and his delegation today begin a visit to Egypt.

Mid-East Arms Control Ideas for Future To Be Presented

TA0501124793 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 5 Jan 93 p A7

[Report by Aluf Ben]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Hans Blix, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, visited Israel approximately two weeks ago as part of consultations with Middle East countries. Israeli officials told Blix that the appropriate forum for discussing regional disarmament is the arms control committee of the multilateral talks, and that the issue would be raised there at the proper time with the agreement of all sides, and not in any other framework. Israel also presented this position in the discussions of the UN General Assembly's First Committee dealing with disarmament.

The next round of arms control talks will be held in Washington on 9 February and will last three days. The agenda has still not been decided because the parties are waiting for the new U.S. Administration to enter office. In the previous round of talks held in Moscow last September, the sides were requested to formulate their "vision" of arms control in the Middle East and to present suggestions for building trust between the region's countries.

Israel's "vision" was formulated by a professional team from the Defense Ministry and Foreign Ministry and approved by the government. This vision will soon be presented by a senior official, even prior to the next round of talks in Washington. This will apparently be Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, in his speech at the signing ceremony of the international treaty banning chemical weapons scheduled to be held in Paris next weekend.

Israel is giving top priority to disarming the Middle East of missiles, as well as to chemical, biological, and nuclear disarmament. Its "vision" will also include general statements regarding the importance of peace relations, mutual trust and friendship between Middle East states, and a call for strengthening democracy in the region.

The draft of this paper has been presented to State Department officials who praised Israel for adhering to the timetable. Israeli sources assess that the United States would like to enter discussions on concrete issues and to end the present phase of the talks on arms control in which too much time is spent on seminars and lectures on arms control worldwide.

The Israeli proposal is expected to be sharply opposed by Egypt, who is demanding to give top priority to the issue of Israel's nuclear disarmament.

Iran Said To Export 'Fanatical Islamic Terrorism'

TA0301093293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 3 Jan 93

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Speaking at the World Jewish Students convention in Jerusalem, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that the coming year would have a decisive influence on whether the Middle East moved toward peace or toward a greater danger of confrontation.

Mr. Rabin accused Iran of being the exporter of fanatical Islamic terrorism in our region.

Deputy Foreign Minister Reviews Cairo Peace Talks

TA0401080393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin by Hayim Zissowitz on 4 January; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Zissowitz] Good morning, Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin. You have just returned from Cairo, where you met Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Usamah al-Baz, President Mubarak's adviser. Among other things, you discussed continuing the peace process following the deportation of the 415 Hamas activists. Have you heard Egypt's view on resuming the peace talks and prospects for success?

[Beilin] The Egyptians believe that the multilateral talks in the framework of the five different committees will resume during February and that the bilateral talks will resume apparently on 20 February. The Egyptians hope that all this will take place despite declarations voiced by various elements in the Arab world. I was very pleased to hear that. Their protest over the deportations not withstanding, they did not indulge in slogans. We did not exchange slogans. The Egyptians also expressed several ideas on how to deal with this issue to remove it from the international agenda.

[Zissowitz] Are you referring to the deportations issue?

[Beilin] Yes.

[Zissowitz] What ideas did they raise?

[Beilin] I do not want to discuss them over the media. I will convey them to the prime minister and the foreign minister.

[Zissowitz] In the statement you made at the end of your visit, you said that Egypt is showing understanding regarding the reasons which motivated the deportation. Does this mean that Egypt supports Israel's move?

[Beilin] Certainly not. I do not want to create such a decidedly mistaken impression. The Egyptians, however, did not just say that the deportation was a terrible thing and a regrettable move but also noted what can be done in this issue. They also understand us because they face a similar problem.

[Zissowitz] Is Egypt concerned about the rise of Muslim fundamentalism?

[Beilin] Undoubtedly. The Egyptians are concerned about what is happening and are seriously dealing with it through education, media treatment, and punishment. They also say that this cannot be done quickly but will take years.

[Zissowitz] Did you discuss the possibility of cooperation between the two countries?

[Beilin] No. Neither the Egyptians nor I raised this possibility. They feel that they have to tackle their problem on their own.

[Zissowitz] Turning to the issue of the peace agreements, Usamah al-Baz reportedly assesses that progress will be made in the next four or five months and that the agreements will be signed before the end of this year. Is this assessment based on Egyptian contacts with Syria?

[Beilin] The Egyptians are basing their assessment on their analysis of the eighth round of the Washington talks. They believe that during this round we were on the verge of reaching an understanding, in principle, both with the Syrians and the Palestinians. That we are engaged in extremely intense negotiations with Jordan is a foregone conclusion. They believe that we were only a few days away from reaching such an understanding. Usamah al-Baz believes that we can reach an agreement next spring and that toward autumn we can actually sign it.

[Zissowitz] Are you referring to a comprehensive peace agreement?

[Beilin] Obviously, with the Palestinians we are talking about an interim arrangement. In the case of Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon, however, he was referring to a signed peace treaty.

Minister Gets 'Bizarre' Georgian Economic Proposal

TA0501074693 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] Israel has been interested in closer ties with the former USSR's Islamic republics in Central Asia for some time. Beyond the considerable economic potential inherent in cooperation with these states, it is believed in Israel that rapprochement with them may in a way counterbalance the influence of Iran and Islamic fundamentalist forces on these states.

Recently, Jerusalem has resolved to take another step toward Central Asia in the form of an official visit by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres to the region. According to a plan emerging at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem, Peres will make a first-ever visit by an Israeli foreign minister to the Central Asian republics in the spring. He is also expected to visit Russia during the same visit.

Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze sent the foreign minister a letter with New Year's greetings yesterday. Besides expressing his hopes for productive cooperation between Georgia and Israel, Shevardnadze raised a new and somewhat bizarre proposal: The Georgian president urged Israel to find a way to join the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Zone. Jerusalem sources said any proposal for regional cooperation would be welcome. A brief perusal of the atlas gave rise to some doubt, as Israel's proximity to the Black Sea is not readily evident to the eye.

While pursuing diplomatic efforts, Israel is also taking action to promote agricultural and scientific cooperation with the Central Asian republics. One of the discussed issues is a joint U.S.-financed development project.

No New Instructions on Rules of Engagement

TA3112194992 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 31 Dec 92

[Text] Brigadier General Ilan Schiff, the military judge advocate, has announced that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has issued no new instructions pertaining to the rules of engagement. Our legal affairs correspondent Shlomo Arad reports that the military judge advocate's statement was made in response to queries from the Civil Rights Association.

Knesset Curtails Mahamid's Immunity, Movement

TA0601152993 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1430 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Excerpts] A short time ago the Knesset plenum embraced the Knesset House Committee's recommendation to curtail Knesset Member [MK] Hashim Mahamid's immunity and to limit his freedom of movement for the next three months. Our correspondent Dov Gilhar reports from the Knesset:

The Knesset plenum decided to limit Hashim Mahamid's immunity, which means that his freedom of movement in all parts of the country will be limited for a period of three months. If he wants to enter a closed military zone he will no longer be able to do so, as he did when he delivered his speech in Gaza [approximately two weeks ago, in which he said that the intifadah should be waged with all available means]. [passage omitted]

Following the vote, MK 'Abd-al-Wahab Darawshah said this was a black day for the Knesset. MK Hashim Mahamid intends to appeal the Knesset decision to the Supreme Court. He will base his appeal on the precedent set by former MK Muhammad Mi'ari, who won an appeal to the Supreme Court against a Knesset decision.

Knesset Endorses Ministerial Appointments

TA3112185692 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 31 Dec 92

[Excerpts] The Knesset took a break from the budget this afternoon to endorse the appointment of Yosi Sarid as environmental affairs minister. As David Ze'ev reports, it was one of a series of changes that also included moving Ora Namir to the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry.

[Begin Ze'ev recording] Yosi Sarid says he is becoming a minister in this government because he believes it is a government that can bring peace. Minister Ora Namir of Labor—herself among the more dovish cabinet ministers—does not believe the inclusion of Sarid will significantly increase the opposition in the cabinet to the more hawkish Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister Rabin did not appear overly enthusiastic today over adding a place for the controversial Sarid at his cabinet table. He would, it seems, have liked to neutralize the fourth Meretz minister with a second minister from SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim]. But, unlike Meretz, which wanted a greater say in cabinet decisions, SHAS spiritual leader Rabbi 'Ovadya Yosef preferred having deputies in the important Religious Affairs, Education, and Housing Ministries over a minister without portfolio, as was offered to SHAS. [end recording]

United Workers Party Chairman Resigns 1 Jan

TA0201144893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 2 Jan 93

[Text] MAPAM [United Workers Party] Chairman Eli'ezer Ronen has resigned from his post. Our correspondent Ya'aqov Balsenboim reports that the resignation took effect 1 January.

In his letter of resignation, Ronen did not elaborate on the reasons for it, but noted three matters in which he apparently believes he failed: Attaining a ministerial position; his efforts to unite the three components of Meretz [MAPAM, Shinuy, and the Citizens Rights Movement] into one party; and the government's decision to deport the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists, to which Meretz ministers agreed and MAPAM Central Committee opposed.

Justice Minister Liba'i Tours Settlement

TA0601111293 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 6 Jan 93 p 7

[Report by Me'ir Turgeman and Shlomo Dror]

[Excerpts] Justice Minister David Liba'i yesterday visited the town of Ari'el in Samaria. Liba'i, the first minister of the current government to visit a settlement in the territories, said that from the political point of view, the government's policy of freezing settlement was a major success. "The head of the local council showed me locations where construction and work on paving roads was stopped. It appears that the declared policy is actually being implemented," the minister said.

Likud Knesset Member [MK] Ron Nahman, the mayor of Ari'el, asked the justice minister to apply Israeli law to Jewish settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. Liba'i said in response: "You are Israelis living outside the boundaries of Israel, the Knesset, and Israel's legal and judicial systems." MK Nahman said that the residents of Ari'el would like to feel equal to the population living inside Israel's boundaries. In response, Liba'i said that just like the Palestinians in the territories, the Jews there also live under the military government. "Applying Israeli law to the territories would mean annexing them to Israel," the justice minister explained, "and even the Likud did not do that." [passage omitted]

Minister Liba'i also said that the autonomy arrangement is complicated and difficult. "Autonomy will not apply to municipal districts populated by Jews," he said. Liba'i explained that he came to Ari'el to get a firsthand impression of the living conditions of the Jews there and to try to prepare for finding a good solution for them within the transitional arrangements, until a permanent arrangement is made. [passage omitted]

Effects of Deportations Felt in Gaza; Troops Cut

TA0601055093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Brigadier General Yom-Tov Sami', commander of the Gaza Strip, said that the deportation of Islamic Jihad and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists can be felt in the field. He told our army affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has reduced its forces in the Gaza Strip, so that the number of companies currently deployed there is the same as eight months ago.

In reference to the letter reservists sent to the prime minister criticizing what is being done in the Gaza Strip, Gen. Sami' noted that people who do 30-day tours of duty in the Gaza Strip do not deal with initiated activity against wanted men and are not aware of all the problems linked to operational activity in the area.

Ten Injured in Clashes; 1,000 March in Gaza 5 Jan

TA0601100393 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 6 Jan 93 p 5

[Pool report]

[Excerpts] Palestinian sources have reported that six Gaza city residents were seriously injured yesterday in severe clashes between residents and the Army in several locations in the city. IDF [Israel Defense Forces] patrols were attacked with rocks in the Jabalyah refugee camp yesterday. Two locals who were injured during this clash were taken to the al-Shifa' Hospital in the city.

Four other locals were injured in clashes yesterday in the Gaza neighborhoods of Zaytun, Tuffah, and Rimal. [passage omitted]

In the al-Shati' refugee camp, one of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] strongholds in the Gaza Strip, some 1,000 Hamas supporters staged a march yesterday. Among the marchers were armed activists who displayed advanced automatic weapons. The marchers hoisted Hamas flags and chanted slogans against the Rabin government and in support of the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam squad, Hamas' military arm.

Several firebombs and burning cans of glue were thrown in Hebron yesterday, causing no casualties. Two firebombs were thrown at an IDF outpost at around 0530. The bottles caught fire, and the soldiers fired their guns in response. Yesterday afternoon, five burning glue cans were thrown at the Beersheba-Qiryat Arba' Egged bus when it was passing the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron. The bus caught fire, but it was put out immediately, causing only slight damage. The IDF closed the area and launched searches. [passage omitted]

Knesset Debates Poll on Talks With PLO

TA0501172993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] The Knesset plenum today held a debate on the findings of a Qol Yisra'el poll that revealed that 30 out of 44 members of the Labor Knesset faction support direct negotiations with the PLO. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that in a motion to the agenda, Likud faction chairman Moshe Qatzav claimed that the results of the poll constitute a vote of no confidence in Yitzhaq Rabin by the Labor faction. Labor faction chairman Eli Dayan retorted that although there is freedom of opinion in his party, the position adopted by the party's Central Committee on this issue is binding.

Minister Hayim Ramon, who responded on behalf of the government, said that it was clear to everyone that the talks with the Palestinian delegation were actually negotiations with the PLO, but they were being conducted according to the Madrid formula. The motion was removed from the Knesset's agenda by a narrow margin of 35 versus 33 Knesset members.

Labor MK's Urge Rabin To Widen Coalition

TA0301082793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 3 Jan 93

[Text] Seventeen Knesset members [MK's] from the Labor party have appealed to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to take immediate steps to expand the coalition. They asserted that the government depended on an extremely narrow and flimsy majority and was therefore hesitant about implementing its policies. Our Knesset affairs correspondent Hayim Hecht reports:

The appeal to Rabin was initiated approximately 10 days ago, after the Meretz ministers and MK's began to publicly agonize over the deportation decision. Dalya Itzik and Eli Goldschmidt collected 12 signatures of faction members and published a manifesto calling on the prime minister to widen the basis of the coalition. Their initiative was warmly received at the Prime Minister's Office, which signalled that although it was a welcome initiative, the MK's should wait until Yosi Sarid was sworn in as a cabinet minister. The logic behind this was that when Sarid became a proud member of the cabinet, Meretz' determined veto against bringing any new partners into the coalition would be neutralized.

Meanwhile, the safety net provided by the Arab Knesset factions has also crumbled. HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] voted against the state budget proposal, while the United Torah Jewry faction abstained [sentence as heard]. Coalition Chairman Eli Dayan has said that they can no longer be relied upon.

The doves in the Labor party are very concerned about the possibility of Tzomet's inclusion in the coalition. Rabin has an excellent coalition, they said. Now, the doves are also planning to publish a manifesto. The hawks, however, claim that Rabin needs Refa'el Eytan on Labor's side precisely in order to have the necessary support to make courageous steps toward peace. With a coalition of 62 members, including Interior Minister Der'i and the SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] faction, whose future actions hinge on the decision of the State Attorney's Office [regarding Der'i's alleged misuse of public funds], making peace would be impossible.

The group of 17 MK's, which has adopted the moniker Force-17 [name of Fatah terrorist squad], includes Dalya Itzik, Eli Goldschmidt, Eli Dayan, Gedalya Gal, Salah Tarif, Gid'on Sagi, Ya'aqov Shefi, Rafi Elul, Yosi Katz, Mikha Goldman, Shlomo Buhbut, Avigdor Qahalani, 'Imanu'el Zismann, Yoram Lass, Ra'anan Kohen, and Yosi Vanunu [16 names as heard]. The government stands on thin and feeble foundations, they wrote Rabin, and expressed their support for any move to incorporate Tzomet, and perhaps even the NRP [National Religious Party], into the coalition.

Rabin Receives Threats Over Archaeological Digs

TA0601061393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] More disturbances in Jerusalem against the archaeological digs at ancient grave sites in the city: Last night, about a 150 Haredi Orthodox Jews protested in Me'a She'arim. They tried to block Sabbath Square with burning garbage carts. The carts were removed and traffic through the square resumed.

At the Prime Minister's Office, threats have been received on the lives of the premier and the director general of his office. In one, a fax was received, directed at Prime Minister Rabin. It mentions the name of the late Jerusalem archaeologist Yig'al Shilo, who unearthed parts of David's City, and says that his was the death of suffering. The message ends with the statement: Retract! Stop the archaeological work at once, because the day of your death draws near.

The director general of the premier's office, Shim'on Sheves, also received threats. An unidentified caller phoned his office and said to him: You have struck at what is holy to us; we will kill you.

The security officer of the Prime Minister's Office lodged complaints with the police.

Meretz, Peace Now To Coordinate Peace Efforts

TA0401175193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] The Meretz faction has reiterated that it is totally opposed to the inclusion of either Tzomet or the NRP [National Religious Party] in the coalition.

Meretz claimed that the coalition agreement stipulated that it could oppose the inclusion of other parties in the coalition, noting that it was determined to insist on the implementation of this clause in the agreement.

Our correspondent reports that the Meretz faction met with the leaders of the Peace Now movement today, and decided to establish a joint body to coordinate peace efforts and future contacts with the Palestinians.

The Peace Now officials vehemently protested the support given by the Meretz ministers for the deportation decision.

New Arrow Missile Launch Planned for February

TA0101105193 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Jan 93 p A1

[Report by defense affairs correspondent Aluf Ben]

[Text] The next launch of the Arrow missile is planned for February 1993. The test will examine the interception capability of the Arrow, which will be fired toward another Arrow missile, which will serve as a target. A weight will be attached to the warhead of the target missile.

The upcoming test will be the fifth in a series of launches of the Israeli antimissile missile and the first in the second stage of the project. The Arrow's last launch was on 23 September. It was a success after three abortive launches.

The second stage of the Arrow's development will include 11 test launches and is planned to end in 1996. The initial launches will be of the existing model, and later a smaller version of the missile will be developed, as requested by the Americans.

The U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative is funding 72 percent of the current development stage, whose entire budget is $321.5 million.

King Husayn, Queen Nur Return From London

JN0501192493 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn and Her Majesty Queen Nur returned to the homeland today from London with God's care following a private visit of several days to the United Kingdom. [passage omitted]

U.S. Accused of 'Blockading' Jordan To Benefit Turkey

JN3112104792 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 31 Dec 92 p 28

["Everyday" column by Tariq Masarwah: "What Is Happening to al-'Aqabah"]

[Text] We have said that the U.S. economic blockade of the al-'Aqabah Port is not meant to blockade Iraq, but to harm Jordan with the aim of benefiting the ports of Turkey in order to compensate Ankara for the closure or the tap of money which the "long-lived ones" [reference to the Gulf Arabs] were pouring on Ankara during the Gulf war.

We heard a senior official say a few days ago that the Americans are currently increasing their pressure on us. We believe this increase in pressure is not related to the pressures on Iraq and Iraq's compliance with the Security Council and its resolutions, but is a means to pressure Iraq to import via the Turkish ports. The American blockade is thus directed against us, and the harassment of the U.S. and coalition navies is directed against the Jordanian port of al-'Aqabah.

We have also heard many importers say that photocopies of import licenses and shipping documents are leaked to the U.S. Embassy in one of the ugliest acts of espionage that can be conducted in any country. We have also heard that the U.S. officer in the Gulf of Aqaba turns back a certain vessel because there is an error in the telephone number of the Jordanian importer or because his address is unclear, thus adding a delay cost, if the vessel is allowed to pass, and a higher cost if the vessel is returned to one of the "Arab allies" ports to unload some of the cargo and allow the U.S. master to search comfortably the vessels coming into the al-'Aqabah Port.

Things are clear. The United States is imposing a blockade on us in order to benefit others and burden the Jordanian importer and citizen with extra costs and deny the Port of al-'Aqabah shipping lines, which we have worked very hard over many years to win. This U.S. blockade is a deliberate malicious act, which principally aims at compensating the Turks at our expense and at the expense of our people and their legitimate, vital interests.

We do not demand a declaration of war against the United States. But, we demand a response, compatible to our size, against this flagrant aggression. And, we can do that.

We can put an end to the theory that Jordan and its interests can be sold to the Turks and others. Turkish transit lines pass through our territory and we can conduct a search just like the U.S. officer is searching the vessels coming into al-'Aqabah. We can also reject the U.S. political "advice" concerning the Washington talks and we can reduce our representation in these talks.

There are ways which a small country like Jordan can pursue, including taking the issue to the UN Security Council, because what is going on constitutes a military-economic aggression against us.

Prince Hasan Meets With Sudanese Official

JN3112192292 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 31 Dec 92

[Text] His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent, has received at his office at the Royal Hashemite Court, Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, speaker of the Sudanese Transitional National Council and head of the Sudanese delegation to meetings of the emergency session of the Arab Parliamentary Union held in Amman on 29 December.

Khalifah relayed to his highness the crown prince a message addressed to His Majesty King Husayn from His Excellency President 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Sudanese National Salvation Revolution Command Council.

During the meeting, fraternal bilateral ties were discussed. Khalifah expressed Sudan's appreciation for Jordan's noble positions on all pan-Arab issues. He also praised Jordan's support for Sudan in all spheres.

Al-Hirawi Addresses Chamber of Deputies

NC0501114293 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0854 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Speech by President Ilyas al-Hirawi to the Chamber of Deputies session in Beirut—live]

[Text] Mr. Prime Minister, Messieurs Deputies: I am visiting you at the start of this new year, which we view with great confidence and hope, so that we can progress in entrenching stability, finalizing liberalization, and launching the construction campaign. I am visiting you with the opening of the extraordinary session so that we can meet like one family, united by factors more powerful and honest than formalities. By this I mean the unity of the Lebanese will be manifested in the people's interaction with the construction and peace march and the utmost cooperation of the institutions in the service of the homeland and citizen.

I worked within the walls of the Chamber of Deputies for just under 20 years, where I conveyed to it the people's dreams and sufferings and communicated the powerful confidence of the al-Biqa' sons in the state, despite the fact that many times it ignored their needs. I was also keen to have my voice resound from its podiums to the whole of Lebanon despite the harsh and scattered stands.

Because Lebanon and democracy are twins, I address you today to confirm that there is no life for Lebanon or any national achievement if they are not based on democracy. I would also like to highlight the role of the mother institution, the Chamber of Deputies. Under its roof, the men and representatives of the homeland took their stands to keep the homeland lofty.

I express great appreciation and gratitude to the former Chamber of Deputies because, thanks to it, the state continued to exist. Amid challenging dangers and circumstances, the Chamber insisted on practicing its responsibilities. Despite the bitterness of homelessness and injustice, it refused to abandon its duties. The Chamber is the body that drew the course of peace. It met in al-Ta'if upon the honorable invitation of the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for which it is much thanked, with the eyes of the world focused on it.

At that time, the hearts of our people in Beirut and the other regions were filled with worry. There were two governments; institutions and departments were divided and incompetent; wars exhausted the country and people; the contact lines increased desperation among the people; state institutions were paralyzed and collapsing; immigration was on the increase; the departure of Arab and international diplomats reached a peak; and capital investment and employment institutions carried on with their ventures without heeding events around them until a whisper began to circulate mourning Lebanon.

Members of the previous Chamber of Deputies were as Lebanon has always known them. With a pure united will, they approved the national reconciliation document, but this was not their only achievement. The previous Chamber did not hesitate to pass legislations even at a time when the laws were being violated. The previous Chamber provided martyrs and if it had stayed in power since 1978, I testify before God, people, and history that it remained, despite everything, the honest guard of legitimacy and the homeland's unity. It performed its role realistically when killing was the common practice and cohesively when the storm of fragmentation hit the nation.

Mr. Speaker, Deputies: First of all, I congratulate you for winning the people's confidence. I hope you will embody this very competently. Nothing lessens the burden of confidence better than the loyalty of accomplishment. If certain people argue that you do not enjoy the confidence of the whole people, then you can, through your actions, underscore the people's confidence in you and the state.

Your esteemed Chamber came after the march of reconciliation, security, and revival of institutions had been advanced but before the implementation of the national reconciliation document has been completed. This, therefore, is an important juncture in our history, calling on all of us to thoroughly meditate what we have already achieved, which is great and honorable, and to look firmly and determinedly toward the completion of what remains, which is tremendous and pressing. I am wagering on the fact that I will pass on to the coming generations a Lebanon of brotherhood and prosperity, after I received it, regrettably, a homeland of crises and disasters.

While in the Chamber of Deputies, I cannot but express pride in the Lebanese people, who are genuine in their patriotism, unity, and rallying behind the state, genuine in their patience, steadfastness, and ability to develop. My people deserve Lebanon.

I cannot but also extend greetings of pride to the Lebanese Army, which, through its cohesion and patriotism, proved that the Lebanese are bigger than all imposed and tendentious wars. With its discipline and other characteristics, and despite its modest capabilities, the Army embodied national loyalty, which fills the souls of our people. It defended the whole country, protected its sovereignty, preserved its unity, and implemented the decisions of the government in the capital and regions, performing its missions with all honesty and competence. The Army revived confidence in Lebanon's ability to progress and to restore its right to liberation and independence.

In my name, on your behalf, and in the name of all the Lebanese, we, from this esteemed Chamber, stress the pledge that we will support the Army and all our security forces, which succeeded in rising up over their burden and rushed to perform their duty with a full sense of responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, Deputies, everyone is certain that the state's unity is the mainstay of ensuring the success of our transfer from despair to hope and from crises to solutions. It has also been proven that every time we achieve success, the people respond unwaveringly.

The state's unity has enabled us to prove that only the state's weapons should prevail and that the only decision should be made by all the people. With the state's unity, we have proven that there is a state in Lebanon and that Lebanon is no longer a land where everyone can have a free hand or an arena for settling the crises and solutions of others or a place for acts of violence, terrorism, and violating the law.

We are about to rebuild the state's institutions in every sector and in all reforms, legislations, and organizational levels so that these institutions can perform their tasks perfectly at home and abroad. Lebanon is one for all the Lebanese and the state protects and defends everyone. That is how we work and that is how we will pursue our line regardless of the sacrifices.

The state is entrusted to preserve the people's security. There will be no leniency toward those who let themselves be seduced to violate security and stability. Allow me to say that mercy is evident in the sword of justice. The state is also entrusted to safeguard the people's money and property. There will be no tolerance toward those who play havoc in the administration and the country. Security will not be confined to military procedures. Security means safeguarding the citizens' lives and dignity and also preventing the squandering of state funds and the violation of citizens' rights.

The state is entrusted to ensure services in all areas. Cooperation between the state and society remains the sound basis for guaranteeing these services. Aren't the Lebanese the people of initiative? Let's all take the initiative, each according to his ability and each in his sector. Little things add up and speed the achievement of the ingredients of well-being.

Mr. Speaker, Deputies, more importantly, the liberation of our occupied land in the south and western al-Biqa' remains our main concern; it is Lebanon's holy cause that we all defend. There can be no peace in Lebanon without regaining the south and western al-Biqa'. And there can be no peace in the region before Resolution 425 is implemented.

Mr. Speaker, Deputies, can we be blamed for clinging to our rights while the world remains silent about the party that continues to violate our sovereignty, assault our people and their possessions, and, indeed, turn our territory into a shelter for those he wants to get rid of. No one asks what is Lebanon's decision on the issue. Provoking a new issue will not distract us from defending our primary cause, namely securing Israel's withdrawal from our territory in line with UN Security Council Resolution 425.

Lebanon will not be trapped. We will not accept bargains about our existence and national harmony. We will not let Lebanon be used as a spearhead to undermine peace and our brothers' legitimate rights. He who provoked the problem must solve it himself. Lebanon bears no responsibility for an issue instigated by another party.

Aggression does not bring peace closer. There is a logic to peace that must be respected by those who seek peace. The state has proved it can establish its authority over its own territory. Let the international community prove its credibility in implementing UN resolutions and in preserving the rights of its member states.

Helping Lebanon to regain its rights in the south and western al-Biqa' is a test for the world on the eve of a new civilized age and a measure of the international community's foundations of right, justice, and peace.

On behalf of all the Lebanese people, we cannot but express appreciation to every generous hand that assisted us in the process of salvation, reform, and peace, notably fraternal Syria. My brother President Hafiz al-Asad and his government were not slow to make every possible sacrifice to boost the Lebanese state's efforts to establish its authority over all its territories.

Mr. Speaker, Deputies, while the former Chamber of Deputies established peace, I see your venerable Chamber as the one that will rebuild the peaceful Lebanon. The challenge facing you and determining the importance of your role is this: Are you the Chamber elected after 16 years of war or the Chamber elected three years after the peace process began? Lebanon's unity is the wager, the way, and the goal. It is the test of loyalty to the homeland.

Sovereignty is not merely defended by preventing foreign forces from encroaching on our national authority. Sovereignty grows by our refraining from dominating one another. We have brought peace to end the people's tragedies. He who obstructs national peace for his personal interests or for circumstantial or sectarian considerations will worsen the Lebanese people's tragedies. The value of each one of us lies not in the benefit he draws from the homeland, but in how much he serves the entire homeland.

The state is not a distribution center. The institutions are not sectarian fiefdoms. Lawbreakers are not such because they belong to this or that sect. Criminals and smugglers have no creed. Evil has no religion. A criminal is a criminal, a smuggler a smuggler, and an outlaw is such, regardless of his sect. An honorable person is honorable irrespective of his religious denomination. Come, let us care together for the citizens.

We want to end the age of baseless conflicts and the preoccupation of dealing with the past and its effects on us. We want to start the age of construction, in which each one of us contributes toward speeding up the return of the displaced people, activating the dynamism of growth, creating work opportunities, developing production, providing services, and encouraging qualified immigrant Lebanese people to return and participate in construction in as much as each one of us works for everyone in planning and implementation.

By adopting democracy, justice, and modernization, Lebanon will shine as a country where man loves God without hating his brother. Given all these factors, we will establish the construction march to put all the people's needs and aspirations before our eyes. If we worked on this principle, it would be out of our love for Lebanon.

Mr. Prime Minister, Messieurs Deputies, the battle today is not between freedom and defeat; it is not among factions or interfactional. The battle today is between the person who works for the state and the person who loves himself more than the state. The citizen's confidence in his state is strengthened when he sees that the officials responsible for him are an example of dedication to duty.

The state did not strike the eastern [Christian] areas because it opposes those areas. It did not carry out its security campaign in al-Shamal [the north], al-Biqa', and al-Jabal because it opposes these provinces. It did not deploy the Army in the southern suburb because it dislikes the suburb. It refused to receive those deported by Israel to Lebanese territory it occupies, not because the state opposes their legitimate cause. The state, in a united stand, approached all these issues out of its concern for the whole of Lebanon; the sovereignty of the law; and protection of its entity, accord, and independence; and to provide life, freedom, and progress for all. It did so to erase the erroneous image of our country and to crystallize the true image of Lebanon—state, homeland, and citizen.

Mr. Prime Minister, Messieurs Deputies, while I am happy to note my appreciation of the government's efforts and cohesion in bearing the burdens of this stage, led by our friend Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, who, along with me, is working to develop Lebanon, you know very well that your government has a list of priorities to organize its work and finalize implementation of the articles in the national accord charter.

We greatly appreciate the role of your honorable Chamber in the progress of this march. Here I would like to highlight Chamber Speaker Nabih Birri's dedication to strengthening the mission of construction, liberation, and peace, and entrenching effective and progressive parliamentary action based on everyone's participation in the legislation and law-passing process through the extensive activity of the committees and the plenum and the fullest implementation of the regulations of the internal system.

There remains the issue of how to guide the people. Al-Ta'if rescued the entity. Now we need to lead the people to the future. My visit to you today is a call to start to prepare the future. Out of respect for the role of the Chamber of Deputies in preserving the homeland's unity, continuing legitimacy, and maintaining democracy, I decorate the Chamber of Deputies institution with the Lebanese Order of Merit First Class. Mr. Chamber Speaker, please approach.

Spokesmen Laud Butrus-Ghali Comments on Expulsions

NC0501134293 Paris AFP in English 1156 GMT 5 Jan 93

[By Michel Moutot]

[Excerpt] Beirut, Jan 5 (AFP)—Lebanon on Tuesday welcomed a threat by U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali to step up the pressure on Israel over the expulsion of more than 400 Palestinians.

A spokesman for Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri described Butrus-Ghali's comments as "positive" and added that Lebanon was making "every effort" to win the return of the men.

At the deportees' camp, spokesman Abd-al 'Aziz al-Rantisi of HAMAS said Butrus-Ghali should "carry out his threats."

Lebanon and Israel have been locked in a battle of wills since the 415 deportees were dumped in south Lebanon on December 17 after being expelled for alleged links to radical fundamentalist groups. Both countries deny responsibility for the men, who are living in a makeshift camp in a no-man's land between Israeli and Lebanese lines.

Butrus-Ghali, in a letter to the president of the Security Council, said he would recommend taking "further steps" if Israel did not comply with Resolution 799 adopted on December 18 demanding the deportees' immediate return. "I wish to state clearly that a matter of principle is at stake: this action (the mass deportation) is illegal under international law," he wrote, without saying what further moves he would recommend.

Lebanon had asked that the text of the resolution include possible sanctions against Israel, but that was rejected by the United States.

Butrus-Ghali said he planned to send a second envoy to Israel, Indian diplomat Chinmaya Gharekhan, before presenting a full report to the Security Council.

He said the failure of the mission by a first envoy, James Jonah, was "attributable primarily to Israel's unwillingness to comply with Resolution 799." [passage omitted]

Birri, Ministers To Attend Meetings in Tehran

NC0601082993 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Following his meeting with Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz yesterday, Homayun 'Alizadeh, charge d'affaires of the Iranian Embassy in Lebanon, announced that Lebanese officials will visit Tehran soon to attend meetings in the Iranian capital. These officials are Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Ministers Walid Junblatt, 'Abdallah al-Amin, Faris Buwayz, and Hagop Demerdjian. 'Alizadeh emphasized the sincere cooperation with Lebanon and noted the strong relations between the two countries. He also expressed support for Lebanon's position on the deportees issue.

Islamic Resistance on Clash With Israelis

NC0501142493 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] An Israeli helicopter carrying Israeli officers landed in the Zummarayya region near the Palestinian deportees' camp at 1100 today.

The Islamic resistance issued a statement today in which it said that one of its groups clashed at 0610 this morning with an Israeli unit near the 'Alman location. Machine guns and artillery were used.

Three Reportedly Wounded in Exchange

NC0501165793 Paris AFP in English 1627 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Tyre, Lebanon, Jan 5 (AFP) - Three people were wounded when Hizballah guerrillas and Israeli forces traded shellfire in southern Lebanon on Tuesday, police and militia radio said.

Hizballah wounded a militiaman from the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army in a mortar bombardment of a position inside Israel's "security zone" along the border, SLA radio said.

The SLA and Israeli army retaliated with a barrage of around 50 shells, wounding two civilians, Lebanese police said.

Hizballah Radio on Attacks

NC0601074893 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] The Islamic Resistance has announced that one of its groups attacked a forward ambush of Zionist and agent militia forces in al-Shumariyah yesterday, leaving a number of enemy dead and wounded. Another group shelled 'Alman position with mortars. The agents' radio admitted that one militiaman was wounded in this operation.

Various areas in Iqlim al-Tuffah came under artillery fire from the positions of the Zionist and agent forces in Sujud and al- Zaffatah. The shelling was directed at 'Arab Salim, 'Ayn Bu Siwar, Jiba', Jabal Safi hills, and al-Luwayzah. The villages of Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, Frun, Bra'shit, Bayt Yahun suburbs, 'Ayta al-Jabal suburbs, al-Sawwanah, and Wadi al-Suluqi also came under intermittent artillery fire from the occupation forces' positions inside the border strip. This shelling slightly wounded Muhammad Juraydi, who was taken to the al-Nabatiyah government hospital. The shelling also caused material losses.

Raid Uncovers, Seizes 'Huge' Weapons Cache

NC0401212493 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] A raid in 'Irsal today resulted in the discovery of a huge arms and ammunition cache.

The Internal Security Forces Directorate General has released the following information: Acting on a report received by the Ba'labakk Company command, a force, supported by Lebanese and Syrian Army forces, raided an underground arms depot in 'Irsal. The following weapons were discovered: two Grad rockets, two 130-mm guns, 40 boxes of 120-mm mortar ammunition, 30 boxes of 60.82—mm mortar ammunition, 20 boxes of 43- and 14.5-mm antiaircraft weapons ammunition, antipersonnel and antivehicle mines, detonation equipment, 20 boxes of illumination bombs, four boxes of detonators, and six boxes of 122-mm mortar ammunition.

In coordination with the Lebanese Army, the Internal Security Forces are moving the weapons.

Army Redeploys To End Perceived Beirut Division

NC0601102193 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] The Lebanese Army carried out a redeployment operation at dawn today in the area extending from Fu'ad al-Awwal Bridge, the port, the commercial center, al-Barbir Bridge, al-Bastah, Burj al-Murr, 'Ayn al-Muraysah, and 'Abd-al-Nasir Mosque as part of a plan to remove the negative impression created by the civil war events about the contact lines.

A statement issued by the Information Ministry says that the redeployment has eliminated the impression created by events regarding the existence of a so-called East Beirut and West Beirut. The statement adds that the redeployment plan was carried out in coordination with the Syrian forces, which are deployed in the area, whereby there will be security cooperation and support similar to what is taking place in other areas.

Khaddam Returns From Tehran, Makes Statement

JN0501174393 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and the delegation accompanying him returned to Damascus today from Tehran after leading a Syrian delegation to the regular meeting of the joint Syrian-Iranian Higher Committee. He conveyed a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

During his visit to Tehran, the vice president held talks with the Iranian president and Iranian Vice President Hasan Habibi. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, the Syrian ambassador in Tehran, and the Iranian ambassador in Damascus attended the talks.

The vice president left Tehran today. He was seen off by Dr. Hasan Habibi, Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Syria's Ambassador in Tehran Ahmad al-Hasan, and a number of Iranian officials.

In a statement to journalists at Tehran Airport, the vice president said: During the visit, I conveyed a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, and participated in the meetings of the joint higher committee. We discussed issues of interest to both countries, with special emphasis on the issue of Palestinian deportees, whom Israel deported within the framework of its policy which aims to empty the land of its people, liquidate the intifadah, and create a new fait accompli in the occupied territories.

'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam added: During the talks, we agreed to support these strugglers and to cooperate with all international circles to implement the UN Security Council resolution on returning them to their country. We briefed the Iranian side on latest developments in the peace talks. We also discussed the recent achievements in Lebanon. The Iranian and Syrian sides expressed their support for the Lebanese Government's efforts to implement the remaining parts of the national accord charter and to achieve security and stability in Lebanon. We expressed our support for Lebanon's policy toward the Israeli aggression.

Khaddam pointed out that the Iranian and Syrian sides praised the great role of the nationalist resistance against the Israeli occupation forces in southern Lebanon. He noted that the two sides reviewed the situation in the Gulf region. He said that views were in agreement regarding the need to establish good relations of cooperation between the Arab Gulf states and Iran based on respect for national sovereignty and noninterference in internal affairs.

He said: We discussed the existing problem between Iran and the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. The Syrian side expressed its desire to settle this problem cordially, especially since its continuation will reflect negatively on the situation in the region, particularly because the UAE was at the head of the states that cooperated with Iran and established relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran after the Iranian revolution. It has also adopted objective stands during the Iraq-Iran war and continued its relations with Iran despite the great pressures to which it was exposed.

Khaddam added: We feel that the Iranian side has a sincere desire to cordially end this problem with the UAE. We hope that a solution will be reached to this problem between these two neighboring Islamic countries. We will resume our contacts on this issue.

Khaddam stressed that the Iranian and Syrian sides discussed all aspects of the international situation, the current developments in the international arena, and their repercussions on our interests. The two sides' views were in agreement on action to reactivate the Nonaligned Movement and the Islamic Conference Organization. The vice president expressed the Syrian delegation's satisfaction with the cordial and fraternal atmosphere of the talks, during which an agreement was reached on the issues which were discussed.

Further on Khaddam Statement

JN0501193093 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Excerpts] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and the delegation accompanying him returned to Damascus today from Tehran after leading the Syrian delegation to the regular meeting of the joint Syrian-Iranian Higher Committee. [passage omitted]

In a statement to journalists at Tehran Airport, the vice president said: During the visit, I conveyed a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, and participated in the meetings of the joint higher committee. We discussed issues of interest to both countries, with special emphasis on the issue of Palestinian deportees, whom Israel deported within the framework of its policy which aims to empty the land of its people, liquidate the intifadah, and create a new fait accompli in the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

In his statement, the vice president thanked President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Vice President Hasan Habibi, Dr. Velayati, and the other Iranian officials.

Asked about Syria's position on the current peace talks, Khaddam said: Syria's position is clear and seeks the achievement of a political solution based on implementing the UN Security Council resolutions, complete Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, and acknowledging the Palestinian Arab people's national legitimate rights.

Regarding Iranian-Gulf relations and recent positions, Khaddam said: For some years now, we have sensed, especially at difficult times, that the Arab countries have a desire to keep good relations. We have sensed a similar desire by Iran too.

He stressed the need to overcome negative aspects that may emerge at certain times, to activate communication, and to achieve as much cooperation as possible.

Khaddam was asked about reports that Israel will withdraw from the Golan Heights in exchange for Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. He said: First, this subject was not raised by anyone. No one has discussed it with us and we have not discussed it with anyone. There is no connection between our presence in Lebanon and the Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights. [passage omitted]

Commentary on Iran Talks, Importance of Coordination

JN0601074493 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 6 Jan 93

[From the press review]

[Text] Commenting on the meetings of the Syrian-Iranian Higher Committee, AL-BA'TH says: The meetings of the joint higher committee, which ended the day before yesterday, affirmed an overall identity of views on all the important regional and international issues discussed by the two sides. AL-BA'TH says that this agreement in views has been entrenched thanks to the strong ties between Syria and Iran since the launching of the Islamic revolution, which announced from the very beginning, its full support for the Palestinian people's legitimate struggle to liberate their land and restore their rights. This agreement in views also underscores the importance of coordination among the states in the region to confront the challenges and dangers to which the region is exposed.

AL-BA'TH says: What proves the soundness of the Syrian-Iranian approach are not only the two countries' joint convictions, but also the rabid campaigns launched by the Zionist enemy every now and then in an exposed attempt to mislead Arab and world public opinion.

AL-BA'TH adds: Hence, special importance is attached to every Syrian-Iranian meeting because the two sides consult and coordinate on regional and international developments.

AL-BA'TH notes that the most important development was the deportees issue and the need to implement Security Council Resolution 799. The issue of Lebanon was also of special interest. The two sides affirmed the need to reinforce national reconciliation and concentrate on the role of national resistance against Zionism.

With regard to the peace process, AL-BA'TH says: The Syrian side reiterated our principled and firm position based on the resolutions of international legitimacy to achieve complete Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territory. Therefore, the talks achieved the expected positive results. The Arabs' central cause needs to be supported by all honest efforts.

Afghanistan

Rebel Rocket Shower Panics Downtown Kabul

BK0601122493 Hong Kong AFP in English 1154 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Report by Terence White]

[Text] Kabul, Jan 6 (AFP)—A morning shower of at least 10 long-range rockets exploded in downtown Kabul Wednesday [6 January], bringing panic to the capital and causing workers to abandon their jobs and flee to their homes.

A Defence Ministry official could not confirm which rebel Mojahedin faction was responsible for firing the missiles into Kabul, but said they came from the south.

Three angry, panic-stricken Afghan women running from a clothing factory blamed the attack on all Mojahedin in general.

"They are dogs—they pretend to be Muslims but they are nothing," one cried.

Western observers speculated that the rockets were fired either by Golboddin Hekmatyar's rebel Hezb-e-Eslami faction, or its self-proclaimed allies, the Hazara Shi'ite Hezb-e-Wahdat faction.

Hezb-e-Eslami is militantly opposed to the government of Borhanoddin Rabbani, conducting an intense rocket bombardment of Kabul last August in which more than 1,000 civilians lost their lives.

A Wahdat spokesman called suggestions that his faction was responsible for firing the latest rockets "just malicious rumours."

"Not only Hezb-e-Wahdat has positions in the south of Kabul. There are also Ettehad-e-Eslami, Harakat-e-Eslami, and other factions stationed there," he said.

Afghan eyewitnesses reported one rocket striking just below the Kabul television broadcasting tower on Asamayi mountain, and others falling near the Interior Ministry and the Prime Ministry building.

No casualties were reported admitted to the former Red Cross hospital, nor the Jamhuriat public hospital near the Interior Ministry, but panic, shock and fear affected people in the vicinity of the explosions.

"As a rule we flee the factory whenever rockets are fired into Kabul," said one of the three seamstresses. "I was so frightened my legs were almost too weak to carry me and I could not speak," said the second.

They seemed however more in fear of shame than of pain. "If we get hit by shrapnel we would be left lying on the ground for all to see," explained the third.

Despite the recent electoral assembly which placed Rabbani in the president's chair for the next two years, many Afghans have a low estimation of government guarantees for peace and security in the near future in the face of its factional opponents. "You can use whichever bad words you like to describe the deeds of these Mojahedin," said one angry shopkeeper referring to Wednesday's rocketting. "Even during the regime of Najib (the deposed communist leader) we were never subjected to this degree of misery by the Mojahedin," added a passerby.

When Mojahedin security guards near the Interior Ministry urged panic-stricken civilians to run following the explosions, an Afghan girl was seen to turn and face them, curse, and spit at their sand- bagged bunker.

Groups Based in Iran Reject Allegience to Rabbani

LD0501175893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Representatives from seven Afghan groups resident in Mashhad in a meeting turned down allegiance [Bay'at] with Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani and called for the participation of all Afghan combative [jehadi] groups in the future government of this country.

According to Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami sources, the meeting also called on Rabbani to transfer power to the leadership council.

The representatives of the Afghan groups said the only way to achieve peace, security, tranquillity, and stability is through ending divisions and separations in the country. And this was conditional on the maintenance of political unity and agreement between combative [jehadi] and Islamic groups and parties.

Participating in the meeting were representatives from the Jebh-e Nejat-e Melli, Mahaz-e Melli Eslami, Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami, Harekat-e Enqelab-e Eslami, Hezb-e Eslami Afghanistan, Jebh-e Fath- ol-mibin, and Jami'at Ulamai Afghanistan.

Judiciary Official Lauds Iran's Assistance

LD0501183493 Tehran IRNA in English 1519 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Kabul, Jan. 5, IRNA—Afghanistan's Deputy of Judiciary Mowlavi Moazen said here Monday [4 January], "we are happy to have a sympathetic neighbour, the Islamic Republic of Iran, which does its best to help Afghanistan overcome the difficulties."

Speaking with Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia-Pacific, Ala'eddin Borujerdi at the Iranian embassy here Moazen said that he was confident of success of Iranian peace efforts between different factions in that country.

Borujerdi said that as the Islamic Republic of Iran helped the Afghan Mojahedin achieve victory during the former Soviet occupation, it will make efforts to restore peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The Iranian official said that Tehran strongly believe that Afghanistan's internal problems should be tackled by the Afghan people and officials through negotiations and understanding.

Saudi Envoy Finally Presents Credentials

LD0601121293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Yesterday, the Saudi Arabian ambassador in Kabul met and conferred with Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani and presented his credentials. The Saudi ambassador, who has been living in Afghanistan for nearly three months, had refused to submit his credentials to this country's government until yesterday.

According to a Kabul television report, the Saudi ambassador also met and conferred with Afghan Defense Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud yesterday.

Bangladesh

Fundamentalists To Prevent Rao SAARC Attendance

BK0601031893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] In Bangladesh, fundamentalists have threatened to lay a siege at the Dhaka Airport to prevent the Indian prime minister from attending the SAARC [South Asian Association For Regional Cooperation] summit next week [13-14 January]. At their gathering after abandoning the so-called march on the Ayodhya issue, the organizers announced their seven-point demands, including snapping of diplomatic ties with India. They also demanded compensation from the Bangladesh Government for the victims of the police atrocities at Jessore which, they claimed, was committed without any provocation.

Three Hundred Stranded Pakistanis To Return Home

BK0401155493 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1430 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] A batch of 300 stranded Pakistani citizens will be flown home to Pakistan in two flights between 9 and 11 January as a token resumption of their repatriation. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Dhaka today that the stranded Pakistanis will return home by Pakistan International Airlines flights. He said those who will be repatriated this month will be selected by the Pakistani High Commission in Dhaka in consultation with Nasim Khan, chief of the Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee. The spokesman said the Pakistani Government has informed Bangladesh that as soon as the construction of housing facilities is completed, 3,000 families of the stranded Pakistanis will be repatriated in the first batch. During Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's visit to Pakistan last year, the government of that country agreed to repatriate 228,000 stranded Pakistanis from Bangladesh. In the early seventies, about 127,000 stranded Pakistanis were repatriated.

Another Thousand Burmese Refugees Return Home

BK0401155893 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1430 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Another group of 1,141 Rohingya refugees have returned to their homes in Burma. With this, a total of 7,103 Rohingya refugees returned home. Our Cox's Bazar correspondent reports that another 15,000 refugees are awaiting repatriation at various transit camps.

India

UK's Clarke on Human Rights, Terrorism, Drugs

BK0501140493 Hong Kong AFP in English 1316 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] New Delhi, Jan 5 (AFP)—Britain will soon ratify a treaty allowing India to extradite Sikh and Muslim rebels, and urged New Delhi Tuesday [5 January] to start a dialogue with Amnesty International to scotch charges of human rights violations.

British Home Secretary Kenneth Clarke, ending two days of talks here, said London also opposed external help to terrorism in India and he would take up the issue with Islamabad after arriving in Pakistan later Tuesday.

New Delhi accuses Islamabad of fuelling armed insurgency in India's north. Pakistan denies helping Punjab's Sikh rebels, but says the struggle by Muslim militants in disputed Kashmir has its moral and political backing.

"India and Britain both face problems of terrorism and such outside help to internal disturbances should stop. I will raise the issue of external support to terrorism in Kashmir when I reach Pakistan," Clarke said.

The British home secretary arrived here January 1 on the second leg of a tour of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan and his first visit since New Delhi and London inked a landmark extradition treaty in September.

Clarke said he met his counterpart Home Minister S.B. Chavan and Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and discussed the extradition treaty, possible joint action against narcotics and alleged human rights violations in India.

"Once the British parliament ratifies the treaty it would be easier for India to extradite terrorists and confiscate their assets ... London wishes to see an end to terrorism in India," Clarke told a news conference.

"We would ratify the treaty as soon as possible and then India could give us a list of people it wishes to extradite," he said, referring to outlawed Sikh and Muslim militant groups which have offices in Britain.

Speaking of New Delhi's opposition to a visit by Amnesty International to Kashmir and Punjab, the home secretary said a dialogue with the London-based human rights group would help India improve its image.

"Britain would like India to demonstrate to the outside world that it is concerned with human rights violations," Clarke said, adding that London was pleased that New Delhi was planning to set up such a commission in India.

India has repeatedly denied Amnesty access to Punjab and Kashmir despite allegations by domestic civil rights groups of human rights violations by troops engaged in anti-militant operations.

Speaking of his talks on drug cartels operating in Asia, Britain and Europe, the British official said Rao and Chavan agreed on the possibility of bilateral cooperation in combating the menace.

"We need to step up efforts to combat drug problems as there is a link between narcotics and terrorism ... Often they are the same people," Clarke said.

Clarke also reacted to the December 6 razing of a mosque in Ayodhya by Hindu fanatics which led to widespread rioting, saying London hoped to see that the secular and democratic setup of India was not disturbed.

He said London took precautions to prevent Hindu-Muslim clashes in Britain and that people who damaged Hindu temples in Britain would be punished.

"Britain deplores such attacks ... We will not permit any disturbances that have racial connotations," he added.

Foreign Investors Hesitant After Ayodhya

BK0601112593 Hong Kong AFP in English 1101 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Report by Pratap Chakravarty]

[Text] NEW DELHI, Jan 6 (AFP)—The demolition of the Babri mosque and Hindu-Moslem riots have dampened the spirit of foreign investors who last year pledged more than one billion dollars in line with India's market reforms, officials say.

A senior Finance Ministry source said pledged investments to India have slowed on a "rapid scale" since the December 6 demolition of the 16th century mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya by thousands of Hindu zealots.

Murli Deora, an influential member of parliament from the ruling Congress (I) party and a former mayor of Bombay, India's commercial hub, echoed the Finance Ministry fears.

"Business people have been complaining that the rate of foreign investment is slowing down," Deora, a member of the parliamentary finance committee, said here Wednesday [6 January]. He told reporters he had recently visited Singapore and was told by businessmen there that they were looking elsewhere following the Ayodhya incident.

"Ayodhya has hurt us," acknowledged the industrialist-cum MP. "Political stability is the most important factor for economic investment."

"But I think it is a temporary phase," he stressed. "We will survive. We will come out of this."

Members of the Indian Federation of Chambers of Commerce, voicing concern over the reversal of the investment trend, said several proposed joint ventures were on the verge of collapse because of the mosque's razing and the subsequent Hindu-Moslem rioting that left more than 1,150 people dead across the country. They did not specify the firms concerned but the Finance Ministry source also said some investors were looking for more stable pastures in Asia.

U.S. firms accounted for 192 million of the 985 million dollars pledged in projects during the first 10 months of last year, but many were reconsidering because of the instability caused by the mosque's demolition, the ministry source said.

"There is nothing we can do until things settle down here a bit," he added, referring to the political and communal fallout of the December incident. During October-November itself we received proposals worth 333 million dollars from foreign investors," said Indian Investment Centre advisor S.K. Kapoor.

But the economist said the centre, run by the Finance Ministry, is yet to hear of fresh foreign proposals for December either from industry or from the Reserve Bank of India, the country's central bank and clearing house.

"We have received nothing so far," Kapoor said, as others in the centre said they hoped for a reversal of the trend to emerge soon.

Investors' interest in India was aroused last year when Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao dismantled four decades of state controls on most industrial and financial sectors and relaxed tax and partnership rules as part of his economic reforms.

Rao made the rupee partially convertible, promising full convertibility at a later date, and swept away a tight regime of licences to boost private enterprise and end the state's stranglehold on key sectors. For all his efforts on the economic front, he failed to prevent the Hindu zealots from razing the Babri mosque.

Pakistan's Reaction to Ayodhya Dispute Assessed

BK0601033593 INDIAN EXPRESS in English 26 Dec 92 p 8

[Editorial: "The Pakistani Reaction"]

[Text] The adoption of a resolution by the Pakistan National Assembly condemning the demolition of the Babri masjid [mosque] in Ayodhya and demanding its reconstruction and measures to strengthen the security of Muslims in India suggests that this issue has added a new dimension to Islamabad's policy of confrontation against this country. New Delhi's protests that such demands are tantamount to interference in India's internal affairs will be of no avail. If Islamabad has made a mockery of the international law so far by fomenting terrorism in Punjab and Kashmir, it has much less reason to be punctilious about accepted norms when it comes to expressing its views on what may be widely seen as a humanitarian issue. The Ayodhya dispute, in other words, gives a new pretext to the Pakistani government to try and aggravate the communal conflict here for ulterior political purposes, not the least of these being the 45-year-old conspiracy to grab Kashmir by hook or by crook. Given this all-important design, interested foreign governments' efforts to restrain Pakistani policy makers are unlikely to have the desired impact.

It must be noted at the same time that the Pakistan Assembly's deliberations on Ayodhya were, by and large, free from hysterical outbursts. It is seldom so especially on a hot religious-cum-political issue in India. The difference this time is certainly not the result of any maturity in outlook. The true explanation is two-fold. In the first place, the retaliatory attacks on the Hindus and the Hindu temples in Pakistan have apparently stunned significant sections of the country's elite. It has thus not been possible for the Pakistani rulers and the legislators to strike a self-righteous posture while condemning the Indian Government for its failure to prevent either the destruction of the Babri masjid or the wave of violence triggered by that tragedy in several Indian cities.

Secondly, there was a sense of shock in Pakistan over the strong action of the government of the United Arab Emirates [UAE], just at this time, against over 2,000 Pakistani inhabitants for attacking local Hindus and Christians and their places of worship, to protest against the destruction of the Babri masjid. Hundreds of Pakistanis have also been deported from the UAE on this account. The fact that the deportation of the Pakistani workforce in the UAE will have an adverse effect on the several of that country's development projects did not deter the authorities from taking firm action to maintain law and order. What clearly hurts the establishment in Pakistan all the more is the perceived lack of any sense of religious solidarity, on the part of the UAE government, in dealing with the violent reactions of the Pakistani expatriates to Ayodhya. Islamabad, however, is certain to welcome the concern expressed by the Gulf Cooperation Council over Ayodhya as something which will make it easier for it to embark on a new anti-India offensive in the Islamic world.

Historians Dismiss Evidence at Ayodhya Temple

BK0601030193 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 26 Dec 92 p 5

[Text] New Delhi—A group of historians and scholars lambasted the claims and the alleged 'evidence' which are being held forth to affirm that a Ram temple existed in place of the demolished Babri Masjid [Mosque] in Ayodhya.

Dwelling on the so-called discoveries of artefacts, and the accompanying claims about these being 'historical evidence', they condemned the whole exercise as a planned fabrication, and a fraud perpetrated to further fundamentalist designs.

They included Mr Kapil Kumar, Mr B.D.Chatopadhyaya, Mr K.M.Shreemali, Dr Suvira Jaiswal and Mr S.C.Sharma.

According to them, the Ayodhya tragedy was a clear cut message of fascism to the country's democratic status-."Political questions are being erroneously given a colour of history. There could be nothing more criminal", they affirmed.

According to one of the historians, he had visited the site and inspected the so-called artefacts being projected as discoveries from the site. He said he was convinced that all these were material transported in from elsewhere and none of them appeared to have been what they are claimed to be.

"You have to adopt a scientific investigative methodology in history and archaeology. And once fabrications take its place, there is no place for either", they pointed out.

They cautioned about the emergence of unscrupulous elements styling themselves as spokesmen for either Muslims or Hindus. They were also of the view that a plaque about the destroyed masjid should be put up at the site if and when a fresh construction comes up there.

Hindus Clash With Moslems in Ahmadabad

BK0501155793 Hong Kong AFP in English 0642 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Ahmadabad, India, Jan 5 (AFP)—Police fired in the air and burst teargas as Hindus and Moslems clashed here Monday [4 January] night over last month's demolition of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya by Hindu zealots, officers said Tuesday.

A police officer and a civilian were injured as the rioters traded homemade bombs and rocks in the Saraspur residential district of this communally sensitive city around midnight.

Police said the situation was tense but under control Tuesday in the area where members of the two communities fought a brief pitched battle despite a night curfew.

Fifty people died in Ahmadabad in Hindu-Moslem rioting that flared after the December 6 demolition of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya by Hindu militants who believe that it occupied the site of a temple razed four centuries ago.

Hindu-Moslem violence left more than 1,150 people dead nationwide.

Commentary Previews Dhaka SAARC Summit

BK0501131293 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Commentary by V.S. Karnik of the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA: "SAARC Summit—Cooperation in Core Economic Areas on the Anvil"]

[Text] The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation or SAARC completes full circle when its leaders meet in Dhaka for the seventh summit on 13 and 14 January. It was in Dhaka in December 1985 that the leaders of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and Maldives met and launched SAARC, and it is in Dhaka this time that the SAARC is expected to make cooperation in core economic areas the association's top priority.

The backdrop for the summit is, however, far from pleasant. The summit was scheduled to be held from 12 December, but was postponed following developments in the wake of demolition of Babri Masjid [mosque] in Ayodhya on 6 December. Pakistan's unrestrained reaction over the demolition and the Muslim fundamentalists' attempt to use the incident to whip up anti-India sentiments in Bangladesh are mainly responsible for such a backdrop. While the summit was put off by a month, foreign ministers of the member-countries met in Dhaka in the second week of December as scheduled and completed the preparatory work, including finalizing the agenda for their leaders.

Though SAARC Charter bars raking up bilateral and contentious issues in its forum, Pakistan apparently planned to raise the Ayodhya incident at the two-day meeting of the foreign ministers. Anticipating the Pakistani intention, Sri Lanka—SAARC's current chairman—preempted, stating that no bilateral or internal matters should be raised in SAARC forums.

Besides the agenda, the foreign ministers also finalized the framework agreement of the South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement—SAPTA—which is expected to be signed by the summiteers. The ministers considered the report of the commission on poverty alleviation program mooted by Sri Lanka at the sixth summit in Colombo. Sri Lanka has formulated a draft resolution for consideration and adoption at the Dhaka summit. On the proposal for a South Asian Development Fund with contributions from non-SAARC nations and international financing agencies, the ministers felt there is need for further discussions on the report prepared by Bhutanese Foreign Minister Mr. Dawa Tsering.

The prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, will leave for Dhaka on 12 January, accompanied by a high-level delegation. He is expected to make a forceful plea for the SAARC to extend regional cooperation to the core economic areas of trade, manufacturing, and services. India holds the view that this would help percolate benefits of the association to the common man in an effective and palpable form. Mr. Rao had said in October last during the first SAARC festival in New Delhi that bringing down trade barriers would help improve the content of regional cooperation. On another occasion, Union Minister Professor P.J. Kurien had said the momentum for SAPTA has been building up and it should be considered whether to bring it into operation in 1993 itself. This view, however, is not shared by Pakistan and Bangladesh. The draft finalized by the foreign ministers at their meeting in Dhaka last month expects SAPTA to be operational by 1995. Even on this, Pakistan and Bangladesh seem to have reservations. Pakistani view is that the SAPTA is being rushed in too soon, while Bangladesh is apparently worried over possible opposition at home over liberalizing trade with the neighbors.

The seventh summit will be an opportunity for India to again try to convince the reluctant members of the benefits of SAPTA and call to make it operational at the earliest. Apart from the summit, focus is on Mr. Rao's bilateral meetings with his fellow SAARC leaders. Particular attention will be on his meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Mr. Nawaz Sharif as Indo-Pakistan relations are considered to be at their lowest ebb at present. Mr. Rao is certain to make it clear to Mr. Sharif that any attempt to exploit the Ayodhya incident will only have further adverse effects on Indo-Pak relations. Mr. Rao is also to tell Mr. Sharif of India's deep concern over official involvement in attacks on minority's places of worship in Pakistan which has debunked its claim to protect their interests.

Congress-I Urges Cutting Ties With Muslim League

BK0601091493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] The opposition leader in Bihar assembly, Dr. Jagannath Mishra, has said that the best way in which the Congress-I could display its secular image was by severing its long-standing alliance with the Muslim League even if it affected the party's vote bank. Talking to PTI in Patna, he said this action will prove beyond doubt that the Congress-I is committed to fight communal forces which have posed a serious threat to the country's unity. He said unless the left parties join hands with the Congress, communalism cannot be defeated. Dr. Mishra however admitted that the left and the

Congress-I had some regional compulsions in some states which were standing as a major obstacle in the path of fighting for secularism. He said one such obstacle was his party's alliance with the Muslim League.

Janata Dal-A Ready To Join With Party Factions

BK0501162893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] The Janata Dal-A president, Mr. Ajit Singh, has said that he has appointed a two-member committee to hold discussions with various like-minded secular parties for a possible alliance, understanding or adjustment. In an interview to UNI in New Delhi, Mr. Ajit Singh said that he is prepared to join hands with the splintered groups of the original Janata Dal. But for that, he said, there has to be the realization of past mistakes and promise of open and frank dealings. The Janata Dal-A leader condemned the march of Muslims in Bangladesh.

Tribunals To Deal With Banning of Organizations

BK0501134093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] The Center has set up two tribunals under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act of 1967 on banning of the five organizations. The tribunal headed by sitting judge of the Delhi High Court, Mr. Justice P.K. Pahari, will cover banning of VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad, World Hindu Council], RSS [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, National Volunteer Corps], and the Bajrang Dal [Hindu militant group]. The other tribunal, headed by Mr. Justice P.N. Nag, will deal with banning of Islamic Sevak Sangh, and Jamaat-i-Islami-Hind [Islamic fundamentalist groups]. The organizations were banned on the 10th of last month.

Armed Forces' 1992 Achievements Highlighted

BK0601031393 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 26 Dec 92 p 6

[Report by Pravin Sawhney: "Army rises to the occasion in a difficult year"]

[Text] New Delhi—In what was a difficult year, the overstretched army did exceptionally well by ensuring [the] sanctity of the Line of Control (LC) and managing onerous internal security tasks. Moreover, while strategic sustenance systems for the three services (which are the ministry's responsibility), fell below required levels affecting war reserves, operational prepardness has been maintained.

The single important achievement has been army's refusal to get sucked into communal events at Ayodhya. For this alone, Army Chief General S.F.Rodrigues deserves praise to have learnt the lessons of Operation Blue Star and withstood both political and bureaucratic pressures, akin to in 1990 when he had refused positioning of troops at Ayodhya.

For the rest, Assam, Punjab and Kashmir turmoil was kept under control only because of army's presence. Irrespective of whoever takes the pat for the Punjab elections, it would have been impossible without army involvement. And while Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh and his police supremo publicly run down Commander 11 Corps, Lt Gen B.K.N. Chibber, for suggesting the plan of army phased withdrawal from the state after the elections, with the Union defence minister joining in the chorus, even ten months after the installation of popular government, life in Punjab is feared unsafe without army presence.

A case in point is Assam. After successful completion of Operation Rhino, most troops were pulled out of Assam and north-east bv June, with the state political leadership pulling wool over public eye that insurgents were in disarray, desperately seeking negotiations on government's terms. Now, with most army out of the entire north-east region, trouble is back, with myriad reports of regroupings amongst various insurgent cadres and growing peoples disenchantment with the government.

The traditionally hot Kashmir got hotter, with repeated attempts by Pakistan to improve its tactical positions along the entire LC. Not a single adventure succeeded; whether it was massive artillery firing in Kerni of Punch district in January, or Palanwala misadventure in Chammb, timed with the washing away of Aknoor bridge by the torrential Chenab river and subsequent displacement of surrounding villages, or the determined bid to dislodge Indian troops in August from Indian subsector west positions in Siachen.

This was possible for three reasons. First, army deployments in both Punjab and Kashmir are such that forces on internal security duties are also available for external operations. By mindful deployment of forces, time needed for movement of troops from within the country to war locations has been saved. Second, there exists enough decentralisation of command and control with units deployed in tactical positions along the LC. And, concepts for artillery and other arms employment along static linear defences in the west are itself under change for better and fast results.

Other army aspects that came under sharp review, especially in the wake of the Gulf war, concern mechanised forces, electronic warfare and communications, artillery and high technology force multipliers. And concepts like Training Command took some shape through the year. Both the army and the air force took to developing organisations for the integration of Prithvi-150 and 250 model missiles. Steps have also been initiated to prepare the army to recieve Prithvi battle-field support missiles by addressing to its requirement of real-time intelligence gathering well within enemy territory. User trials for indigenous Remote Piloted Vehicle (RPV) from pilotless target aircraft Lakshya, are slated for 1993. And search for procuring medium range battlefield surveillance radars are on.

For the navy, it was a year of naval diplomacy, as part of the government resolve to improve relations with littoral countries of the Indian Ocean. Various goodwill visits, port callings and both executed and planned joint exercises with neighbouring navies have been aimed at assuring countries about the cooperative intent and purpose of the Indian Navy in the new world order dispensation, where emphasis has shifted to regional power balances.

The biggest air force achievement during the year has easily been its air logistics support to the troops in Siachen: The conversion of Thoise airfield into a full-fledged Forward Base Supply Unit (FBSU) has facilitated the stationing of Mi-17 helicopters on rotation duty from Pathankot, Sarsawa and Ambala, to air drop supplies to the forward logistics base and five staging camps stretched along the entire glacier length. IL-76 and AN-32 have been employed to reach the supplies to Thoise. This year also witnessed hightened services diplomacy as part of various United Nations missions to strife-torn parts of the world. About 1,400 Indian troops are in Cambodia as part of UN peace-keeping forces. And Lt Gen Satish Nambiar gets the honour of being the overall UN forces commander in Yugoslavia. Moreover, a brigade group troops is being ready to assist the US peace-making operation 'Rescue Hope' in Somalia.

While the services did well this year, unfortunately, large number of senior officers got embroiled in mostly senseless controversies bringing down troops morale by sufficient notches. It started with the army chief stating a truth that "good governance is army's responsibility also." And vested interests took the opportune moment, when Gen Rodrigues was down, to charge him of favouritism towards artillery officers in promotion, even calling him Chief Of Artillery Staff (COAS). The facts speak otherwise. In the 1959 batch promotions board to acting Lt gen, held in April, only one artillery officer out of 14 maj gens, got approved. And amongst the 1962 batch results held in July, not a single artillery brigadier out of 32 aspirants made it to the rank of Maj Gen.

The air chief also came under criticism for his idiosyncrasies, as did the naval deputy chief for his promotion despite his unprecedented conduct in dragging senior ministry officials to court on moral turpitude grounds. Much that happened, however, has been because of lack of an efficient and competent services public relations system.

Foreign-Country Evidence Sought in Stock Scandal

BK0601041393 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] A warrant to arrest Mr. Niranjan Shah, a close aide of Harshad Mehta [accused in stock market scandal] will be issued in a day or two. This was stated in New Delhi before the Joint Parliamentary Committee [JPC] probing the security scam by the heads of the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] and other investigating agencies. Mr. Shah has been absconding from the country and is reported to be in Dubayy. He is wanted for his alleged involvement in a multi-crore narcotics smuggling case and violation of foreign exchange regulations. Briefing newsmen, the JPC chairman, Mr. Ramnivas Mirdha, said the CBI and other agencies are seeking the cancellation of Mr. Niranjan Shah's passport. They are also requesting the External Affairs Ministry to move the United Arab Emirates for canceling his visa.

The CBI is to move the Bombay special court for issuing letters rogatory for evidence from several foreign countries in connection with security scandal. The foreign assistance has become imperative in view of reports of sizable funds having been siphoned off to secret bank accounts abroad during the period of security scam. The investigating agencies also said that the scam is now estimated to involve a staggering 5,341 crore rupees.

Iran

Foreign Ministry Communique on Bosnia-Hercegovina

LD0501181293 Tehran IRNA in English 1644 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 5, IRNA—The Foreign Ministry in a communique Tuesday [5 January] warned the international community that the Serbian troops were seeking to brutalize Muslims in Kosovo and Sandzak in their ethnic cleansing for the creation of a Greater Serbia.

It said in Kosovo and Sandzak the Serbian soldiers were engaged in widespread decimation of Muslims on the unfounded claims of the smuggling in of weapons and interference of foreign elements and showed news reels on the state television that vaguely suggest the same idea.

The communique added that upwards of 100,000 Muslims had been killed in B-H [Bosnia-Hercegovina] and Croatia and over one million made homeless. It warned that the Islamic Republic of Iran was deeply concerned about the brutality of the Serbian Army and police and the spread of the war in the Balkans.

The communique called on the international community and the European Community to make every precautions against the outbreak of "another catastrophe" in the region.

Envoy Informs UN: 'No Iraqi Funds in Iran'

LD0601103593 Tehran IRNA in English 1003 GMT 6 Jan 93

["No Iraqi Funds in Iran, UN Informed"—IRNA headline]

[Text] United Nations HQ., New York, Jan. 6, IRNA—Iran has informed the United Nations that there were no petroleum, petroleum products or funds for oil transactions with the Iraqi Government in Iran.

Iran's permanent envoy to the United Nations announced this in response to a letter of the U.N. Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali dated October 26, 1992, in which he had called on all U.N. member states to report to the Security Council the amount of petroleum or funds blocked after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

The letter read that there were no petroleum or petroleum products or funds of the Government of Iraq, or of its state bodies, corporations or agencies, that represent the proceeds of sale of Iraqi petroleum or petroleum products subject to the provisions of Security Council Resolution 778 (ratified in 1992).

Over 30 countries have replied to Butrus-Ghali's letter including the five permanent members of the Security Council. Most of the states have replied that no Iraqi oil consignment or funds had been blocked in their countries.

Syria's Khaddam Ends Visit 5 Jan; Comments

LD0501180593 Tehran IRNA in English 1528 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 5, IRNA—Visiting Syrian Vice-President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam said in remarks prior to his departure from here today that Iran was willing to resolve its dispute with the United Arab Emirates through peaceful and friendly ways.

Khaddam said the UAE was among countries which maintained friendly relations with Iran during the Iraqi war. He said Syria was eager to mediate a peaceful settlement of differences between Iran and the UAE.

Khaddam also described as "satisfactory" the outcome of his talks with Iranian authorities during his 3-day stay here. He said based on his past experiences he has come to the conclusion that most Arab countries desire to maintain good ties with Iran even under the hardest conditions.

But, he said, since every country in the region had its own policies and with regards to stands of the regional governments on the current developments, naturally there should exist political differences.

On the deportation of over 415 Palestinians from their homeland by the Zionist regime, Khaddam said both Iran and Syria are of on accord in supporting the Palestinian deportees in international circles and call for implementation of U.N. resolutions in this regard.

He said he had also discussed with Iranian officials the latest developments in the Middle East talks, adding that the policy of Damascus is based on enforcement of the relevant Security Council resolutions calling for withdrawal of Israel from the lands it had occupied.

On the stands of Tehran and Damascus on Lebanon, Khaddam said both agreed on the need to help Lebanon with its reconstruction efforts and to support the new Lebanese government.

The two countries also support the struggles of Lebanese people against the occupation of their territories by the Zionist regime, Khaddam said.

The Syrian vice-president said that Tehran and Syria agree on the need to strengthen and activate the Nonaligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC].

Khaddam arrived here Sunday [3 January] with a message from President Hafiz al-Asad for his Iranian counterpart Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

Iran's First Vice President Hasan Habibi, who was at Tehran airport to see off Khaddam, said "our analysis of the situation in the Persian Gulf is clear—that is the region should be free from foreign forces, and only countries of the region, and not alien forces, should interfere in the regional affairs."

Commenting on Iran's policy towards the Persian Gulf states, Habibi said "the Islamic republic's policy is based on the political will of its leader and nation that we should have best relations with our neighbors on condition of mutual respect."

"We told our Syrian friends that despite unfriendly attitudes by some of our southern neighbors during the Iraqi-imposed war, we tried to forget those cases after the conflict and decided to expand ties with them. We even took practical measures for this purpose," he said.

The first vice president reiterated Iran will make efforts to remove any misunderstanding through mutual negotiations.

Referring to the problems of the Muslim world, Habibi said that Islamic countries should act in such a way that international organizations and circles pay attention to their concerns.

Habibi, calling for the strengthening of the Nonaligned Movement and OIC, said the OIC should pay more attention to the destiny of Muslims in Bosnia-Hercegovina and Palestine and to confronting anti-Islamic provocations in India.

He termed the expulsion of over 400 Palestinians from their homeland as an "old Israeli tactic" aimed at occupying Palestinian land.

"The people expelled by the Zionists from their homeland are among the learned and knowledgeable Palestinians. The Zionist regime intends to keep leaders of (Palestinian) strugglers away from people," he said.

Habibi voiced Tehran's support for the process in which the new Lebanese government is being shaped and expressed hope that the new government in Beirut would proceed with its independent policy and will thoroughly establish itself.

Syrian Steps To Bring Iran, Arabs Closer Praised

LD0501134593 Tehran IRNA in English 1313 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 5, IRNA—An Iranian daily Tuesday [5 January] welcomed Syria's efforts to bring Iran and the Arab world closer with due respect to ten years of brotherly relations and religious affinities between Tehran and Damascus.

Referring to the visit of Syria's Vice-President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam to Tehran, the editorial in the Persian daily 'ABRAR' commented on Khaddam's remarks upon arrival Sunday that his country will take steps towards establishing friendly and brotherly relations between Iran and the Arab world.

It said Khaddam's remarks could be understood as Syria is wisely taking steps towards rapprochement of Iran and the Arab world with full knowledge of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy and that Arabs have realized the significance of relations with Iran and at the same time are aware of Syria's important status for the Iranian authorities.

Describing Khaddam as an experienced and active statesman in the Arab world, the daily's editorial said he has realized that the fear of the Sheikhs from Iran is a "mere imagination."

"If the sheikhs are unaware and incompetent, Khaddam can remind them of the attitude of the deposed Shah of Iran, supported by the West, and of the Islamic Republic's policy towards them."

"Therefore, with due respect to ten years of brotherly relations and the religious solidarity between the two countries, the efforts of the Syrian brothers could be esteemed provided that the messengers speak themselves and listen by their own ears."

It said in conclusion "the Islamic Republic is the strongest, the largest and the most populated country in the region and that Tehran regards Syria as its own friend and respects the efforts by its leaders."

Pakistani Delegation Arrives for Visit 1 Jan

Welcomed by Majles Speaker

LD0101132793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 1 Jan 93

[Text] Pakistan's National Assembly Speaker Gauhar Ayub Khan arrived in Tehran today at the head of a high-ranking delegation. He was welcomed by Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri.

The speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly took part in an exclusive interview with us. He expressed pleasure at visiting the Islamic Republic of Iran, and conveyed the warm greetings of the Pakistani nation and Government to the noble Iranian nation. He said the reason for his trip to our country is to pay an official visit, which is aimed at strengthening relations between the two countries of Iran and Pakistan in all spheres, in particular deepening relations between the two countries' parliamentary friendship groups.

He added that during his visit he will also discuss regional and international issues, in particular the issues of Kashmir, the Babri mosque, the situation in Afghanistan, the newly independent Central Asian Republics, and the Economic Cooperation Organization of Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, and a number of Central Asian Republics. He said he will also follow up various other issues, such as the Iran-Turkey railway project, the refinery [not further specified], a road link with Pakistan, and other issues.

Mr. Nateq-Nuri also took part in the same interview, referring to a great deal of common issues between Iran and Pakistan, and said that the two countries have enjoyed good relations since the victory of the Islamic revolution, and they are expanding on a daily basis. The Majles speaker added that Ayub Khan's visit takes place at the invitation of the Islamic Consultative Majles and said: During our meetings we will discuss the strengthening of relations between the two countries' parliamentary groups, various regional and international problems, and political and cultural issues.

Confers With Velayati 2 Jan

LD0201113393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 2 Jan 93

[Text] Regional issues, and particularly the problem of Afghanistan and the Babri mosque developments, as well as Iran-Pakistan cooperation within the framework of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), were discussed in talks held today between Foreign Minister Velayati and Pakistan's National Assembly Speaker Gauhar Ayub Khan.

Our country's foreign minister stressed the importance of friendly ties, and said that continuous mutual understanding and cooperation between the two countries' officials on regional issues are vital. He also gave details of the Islamic Republic of Iran's efforts to bring various Afghan groups closer together.

The speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly also spoke of the depth of old relations between the governments and nations of Iran and Pakistan, and said perpetual consultation between the two countries' officials are significant in finding a fundamental solution to the problem of Afghanistan. He also explained the latest developments about the Babri mosque and called for close cooperation to solve that problem.

The two sides condemned the issuing of any kind of permit to build a temple or the performance of any non-Islamic prayers at the Babri mosque.

Speaks With Friendship Group Head

LD0301225193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 3 Jan 93

[Text] The speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly and the delegation accompanying him met with the head of the Iranian-Pakistani parliamentary friendship group at the Majles this afternoon.

At the meeting, Pakistan's National Assembly speaker pointed to the imminent privatization of the greater part of the economic sector in Pakistan and said that his country is a suitable place for investment by Iranian contractors. He called for cooperation between the two countries in the economic and industrial fields.

The Islamic Republic's head of the Iranian-Pakistani parliamentary friendship group described the activities of friendship groups in the two countries' parliaments as very important to the strengthening of relations, bearing in mind international and regional events.

Meets Hashemi-Rafsanjani 3 Jan

BK0401095593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] The Pakistani parliamentary delegation led by National Assembly Speaker Gauhar Ayub Khan called on Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani in Tehran yesterday. They held talks on the international and regional situation and bilateral relations. The speaker lauded the Iranian stand on the tragic demolition of the Babri Mosque and its step to exert pressure on India to protect the holy places of Muslims. He referred to the issues confronting the Islamic world, including Kashmir, Afghanistan, Palestine and Bosnia- Hercegovina, and expressed happiness that Pakistan and Iran hold identical views on these issues. President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that the two countries should continue joint efforts for the resolution of the Afghanistan, Palestine and Bosnia-Hercegovina issues.

On Afghanistan, they agreed that Iran and Pakistan should continue assistance to Afghan people because peace and tranquillity in Afghanistan is essential for stability in the region. Shamshad Ahmed, the secretary general of the Economic Cooperation Organization, also called on Gauhar Ayub Khan and apprised him of proposals for boosting cooperation among member countries.

Islamic Conference To Be Held

LD0401143993 Tehran IRNA in English 1412 GMT 4 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 4, IRNA—Speakers of the Iranian and Pakistani parliaments here Monday [4 January] agreed on formation of an Islamic Interparliamentary Conference with a charter independent from that of the Interparliamentary Union (IPU).

The speakers in their second round of talks also decided to set up sub-committees comprising parliamentary friendship groups of the two countries in order to speed up implementation of mutual agreements.

Iranian Speaker Hojjat ol-eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri agreed with a proposal of his Pakistani counterpart for the establishment of a parliamentary assembly consisting of speakers of parliaments of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member states.

"This assembly would have a positive impact on the ECO approvals," Nateq-Nuri said. ECO has now 7 new members in addition to the founding countries of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey.

Nateq-Nuri said transfer of parliamentary experiences to the newly-independent countries of Central Asia would help these countries to compile laws aimed at maintaining peace and stability in these countries. "These countries are in need of our help, and we can provide them with useful assistance in this regard," he added.

Meanwhile, Pakistani Speaker Gauhar Ayub Khan referred to operation of bandits and drug traffickers along the Iran-Pakistan borders, and said broad economic cooperation between the two countries require tranquility and security.

He promised that Pakistan would cooperate with Iran for eradicating the bandits and traffickers.

Further in the meeting, Iranian Road and Transport Minister Mohammad Sa'idi-Kia reported on the activities of the two countries joint economic commission meet.

Ayub Khan heading a delegation arrived here Sunday.

President Receives Departing Indian Envoy

LD0201120693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 2 Jan 93

[Text] The Indian Ambassador to Iran was received by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today at the end of his mission to Iran and called for the expansion of Iranian-Indian ties.

During the meeting Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani announced satisfaction at the mission of Hamid Ansari, Indian ambassador to Iran, and expressed hope that with regard to the existing cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and India, the two countries' relations would expand and the Indian government uses wisdom and farsightedness to overcome that country's problems in connection with the destruction of the Babri Mosque and does not allow ethnic clashes to disturb peace and security in India.

Majles Speaker Regrets Indian Temple Demolition

LD0201135593 Tehran IRNA in English 1321 GMT 2 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 2, IRNA—Indian Ambassador here Muhammad Hamid Ansari on Saturday [2 January] said the Hindu zealots who demolished the 16th Century Babri Mosque in Faizabad actually trampled upon the principle of peaceful coexistence established by Gandhi and Nehru.

Ansari, meeting with Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, termed the 6th of December, the day the mosque was razed by Hindu extremists, as the most unpleasant day for the government and people of India.

He also briefed the Majles speaker on the latest developments in connection with the Babri Mosque.

Nateq-Nuri expressed regret over the Indian Government's failure to pay due attention to the mosque before it was levelled to the ground by the extremist Hindus.

"It is regrettable that the Indian police allowed Hindu extremists to carry out their rituals at the site of the ruined mosque but prevented Muslims to hold ceremonies there yesterday," the speaker said.

"The issue of the Babri Mosque is not a matter of a building but rather is confrontation with an ideology and belief, and the incident has hurt the sentiments of more than one billion Muslims of the world," Nateq-Nuri pointed out.

Velayati Sends Messages to India, ICO on Mosque

LD0501165693 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] In the wake of the recent bitter incidents in India, Foreign Minister Velayati has sent a message to the Indian foreign minister about the Hindus being allowed to worship on the usurped plot of Babri mosque while the Indian Muslims are not being permitted to worship at the mosque.

While condemning the unlawful acts of the extremist Hindus and reiterating the mutual interests of the two countries, the message calls on the Indian government to deal decisively and according to law with anti-national elements, and to gain world confidence in the rule of law and order in India by rebuilding the Babri mosque.

Following the prompt move of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] in taking a stand regarding the destruction of Babri mosque, Mr. Velayati has also sent a message to the secretary general of the organization.

The message stresses that if the ICO move is based on Islam's glorious culture it will deter the arrogant world from desecrating Islamic sanctities, and notes that it was following this move and the reactions of the political-religious forums in Muslim countries that the Indian government took on the responsibility of rebuilding Babri mosque.

Declaring Iran's support for the Islamic stances of the ICO, Mr. Velayati calls on that organization to place at the head of its agenda the issue of rebuilding the mosque on its original site.

Velayati Starts European Tour on 7 Jan

LD0601102693 Tehran IRNA in English 0953 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 6, IRNA—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati will launch a 10-day tour of four European countries, to discuss bilateral ties as well as regional and international developments.

Velayati's visit to Poland and Albania will take place at the official invitation of his counterparts where he would discuss matters of mutual interest.

In Austria he will attend a seminar of Iranian diplomatic corps in Europe and is also expected to hold meetings with Austrian officials.

While in Paris, in the last leg of his tour, Velayati will attend a chemical disarmament conference later this month.

Observers here attach great importance to Velayati's trip in view of the critical situation in the Balkan region.

Other issues including the ongoing genocide of the Muslims in Bosnia-Hercegovina will be on the top of the agenda of Velayati's talks in Europe.

IRGC Commander Leaves For Visit To PRC

LD0301213093 Tehran IRNA in English 1828 GMT 3 Jan 93

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 3, IRNA—Commander of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps of Iran Brigadier General Mohsen Reza'i left for Beijing Sunday [3 January] at the invitation of the Chief of the Joint Staff Command of China's People's Liberation Army General Zhang Wannian.

In China the Iranian Army commander will confer with officials and military commanders of that country.

The visit to China by Reza'i is to last six days. He is also accompanied by a group of IRGC officials.

Agreement Reached with Saudi Arabia on Pilgrimage

LD0401135993 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] It has been agreed with Saudi Arabia that 115,000 of our compatriots will be blessed with the opportunity of going to the House of God as a part of next year's Tama'tuh pilgrimage. The head of the Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization announced this in an interview with reporters today, adding that in the course of his visit to Saudi Arabia, where he met with that country's officials, a number of agreements were reached over the number of pilgrims, the question of transport and the provision of facilities, such as housing and transport, for pilgrims. He said: The transport of pilgrims to the House of God would commence 7 May 1993, while their medical examinations would begin on 15 January. [passage omitted]

Speaker Calls for Promotion of Ties With Sudan

LD0301211293 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in English 1415 GMT 3 Jan 93

[Text] On the eve of Sudan's independence anniversary, a message of congratulations has been sent to the speaker of that republic's national transitional parliament by Iran's speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, Mr. Nateq-Nuri. In the message, hope has been expressed for the promotion of the two Muslim countries' fraternal ties as well as that of sincere mutual cooperation.

West's View of Human Rights Assailed by Paper

NC0401132793 Tehran SALAM in Persian 16 Dec 92 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "Human Rights—Political Ploy or Cultural Values?"—punctuation as published]

[Text] Human rights in Iran are being discussed extensively at home and abroad. Last week, after studying a report by Galindo Pohl, the UN secretary general's special representative on human rights in Iran, Committee Three of the UN General Assembly approved a resolution against the Islamic Republic of Iran by 85 to 16 votes with 34 abstentions. Thus the West took a so-called effective and practical step concerning the Islamic Republic of Iran by using the political ploy of human rights. (Apparently this resolution will soon be put to a vote at the General Assembly).

Human rights should be viewed from two angles:

1. Some analysts, whose view is considered to be the traditional and common one, see human rights as a shabby tool in the hands of Western powers that decide to use it as circumstances and conditions dictate against a country or a regional or global power. Our propaganda to neutralize the enemy's onslaught is usually in the same style: Why don't human rights organizations say anything about the inhuman acts in Israel, South Africa, and ... or why are they silent about the violation of human rights in the United States, and so on?

Generally speaking, this view is correct and does not deny realities, but it cannot paint the entire picture with all its subtleties. So it is sluggish and ineffective. To further clarify the issue, it is not a bad idea to study how human rights are used as a political ploy when it comes to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It should be said that during the past three years, Iran has extended the utmost cooperation to the UN secretary general's special representative on human rights. And for the first time Galindo Pohl visited the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1369 [year beginning 21 March 1990]. His report on the first visit was so positive that counterrevolutionary groups abroad started to complain. From every direction, abusive language was aimed at Galindo Pohl and the West was accused of compromising with Iran! What was the natural reaction to all this at home? That a great success had been scored in the field of foreign diplomacy! But the truth was that with this step the seed that had been sown for Iran's foreign relations did not grow and the outcome was foreseeable. From the West's viewpoint, attaching value to the views and judgments of "foreign powers" (not to world public opinion) on the situation of human rights in Iran is far more important than all the periodic reports by Galindo Pohl put together. In these three years—and on the basis of the same criteria used by the foreigners—if human rights in Iran have not improved, they have not worsened. Today we see the number of votes in favor of the resolution rising to 85 from last year's 52 votes! Why?

Has the Islamic Republic's hostility toward the West and the United States intensified in these three years? Aren't the release of the Western hostages in Lebanon (while we do not have the slightest news on the fate of the Iranian and Lebanese hostages); the improvement of relations with the regional shaykhs, especially with Saudi Arabia (while forgetting their crimes during the imposed war and tragic events in holy Mecca); the adoption of a policy of detente, especially with the West; "not creating enemies"; and reviving commercial relations with the United States; and so on not considered as the major criteria that speak of an easing of Iran's hostility toward the West and regional reaction? If this is so, why have we been unable to make the necessary use of the human rights issue, which is traditionally a political phenomenon? Is the enemy demanding even more concessions from us? Why and how? And where will this process lead?

2. Paying attention and attaching significance to human rights in Iran from another angle—the judgment and votes of the world's people, especially the large Muslim community at home and abroad—is not only favorable, but also necessary for the continuing existence of the values of the Islamic revolution and for the revolution itself. Any explanation and change or reform in the process and mode of domestic affairs (within the framework of the shari'ah and laws), which takes place bearing in mind the above, is not wrong; it will also help to consolidate the bases of the Islamic system. Accepting any reform or change, even minor, based on advice by the United Nations and by its behind-the-scenes powers will lay the foundation of continuing foreign interventions in our domestic affairs.

As was said, the Islamic Republic of Iran is based on an ideology, on revolutionary Islam, on opposing the West's capitalist system and—according to his eminence the imam, may his soul be sanctified—on pure Mohammedan Islam. Accusing it of opposition on human rights is an effort to distort its face before the world and weaken its strong bases.

It will not be out of place to say that the main objective of the United States and the West in accusing Iran of opposition on human rights is to portray to nations, especially Muslims, that Islamic values are infectious—in a bid to replace these nations' inclination toward Islam with hostility. So the best way to remain immune to this cultural-political plot is:

1. To ignore judgments by the arrogant powers on how Iran deals with human rights;

2. To attach importance to the people's votes; observe the rights of Iranian citizens; show commitment to generally accepted criteria; and create unity using the Constitution and other laws as a pivot instead of using personal tastes and inclinations.

Suppression of Muslims by Arab States Decried

LD0501133393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1056 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] In the name of God. Greetings, dear listeners. Our first political commentary is about the meeting of Arab ministers. Let me draw your attention to it.

The interior ministers of Arab countries are meeting in Tunis in order to adopt a unified strategy for confronting what they have described as terrorism. The Tunisian president asked in his message to the meeting for preventative measures to be taken to protect society and that ways of combatting the phenomenon of religious radicalism should be identified. However, the Egyptian interior minister has said: We are not against radicalism. What we condemn is the terrorist, who tries to impose his view on others by force and through violence; we must not equate terrorism with radicalism.

The truth is that the Arab League, in full coordination with the West, is unfortunately trying to come up with a plan for combatting Islamicism and the spread of revolutionary Islam and to use, to this end, words and expressions such as terrorism, fundamentalism, and religious radicalism, which have all been fabricated by western governments.

From the point of view of the West's propaganda monopoly, any Muslim who wants to base his life on Islamic rules and teachings and to act on them, who wants to return to the roots and to fundamentals and who, therefore, opposes everything new will be called a fundamentalist. Such a person may also be called a radical, and because he insists on upholding his beliefs and wants all the governments of Islamic countries to implement every Islamic regulation, he is also given the title of terrorist.

This word game does not reflect realities in any way, of course, because implementing the shari'ah does not conflict with progress at all. It may be possible, in some countries, that some people who are being severely suppressed will resort to violence but this reactive phenomenon does not in any way mean that violence is a basic principle of Islamism.

The main problem of these governments is that they are dependent, have weak economies, and do not consider themselves as having any identity without the West's support. The Muslim people of these countries are unhappy about this state of affairs and consider the only way forward to be full implementation of the Islamic shari'ah. Now, instead of using this popular force and moving toward independence, the governments of the region want to confront it and to put in prison and do away with any free-thinking Muslim who opposes the current situation by calling him a terrorist and a radical. However, the reality is that belief in Islamic awakening lies in the heart of every Muslim individual and mere weapons and suppression can never overpower beliefs.

The Egyptian interior minister said in the meeting in Tunis that specific definitions of terrorism and radicalism must be identified. That is, in fact, true because there is in reality no Islamist who wishes to impose his view by killing innocent people and by shedding blood. However, in view of the behavior of such countries as Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria there is no doubt that, in their opinion, Islamism is the same as support for violence and terrorism.

If these governments are looking for a unified strategy for confronting fundamentalism, a ready-made prescription exists which has been used many times. Look at the way Yitzhaq Rabin and the Zionist government deport the best Muslim free-thinkers from Palestinian territory or throw them into prison; look at the way they shoot and kill Muslims in Qods [Jerusalem] or in other Palestinian towns. Do the Arab interior ministers want to go down the same path as Yitzhaq Rabin? Would it not be better if the Arab governments used the fury of their Muslim people to combat the crimes of the Zionist regime and to make the enemy regret its actions? Must it be that, alongside the suppression of Muslims in Palestine and Bosnia-Hercegovina, Arab governments too should embark on suppressing Arab Muslims?

Commentary Sees Pressure on Bosnia Muslims

LD0501173593 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Station commentary]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The Bosnia Muslims have been forced to take a more conciliatory stand because they want to maintain their unity with the Croats and because they have been pressured by other parties in the talks as well as by the western negotiators.

In the final analysis, some political experts have reached the conclusion that the outcome of the negotiations has been in the interest of the Croats. Pressure has been reduced on them on two fronts, while the Muslims have been under pressure in the negotiations and forced to accept the proposed peace plan.

At any rate, the formalistic division of Bosnia is a small example of the revival of the former federation of Yugoslavia with its existing minorities. Thus the main cause of fighting in Bosnia-Hercegovina, its ethnic mixture, will be maintained in smaller units.

Thus, in the same way that ethnic tensions in the former Yugoslavia caused the war, an ethnically-mixed Bosnia divided into smaller areas could repeat this tragic experience.

Details of National Budget Bill for 1993-94

LD3112182192 Tehran IRNA in English 1636 GMT 31 Dec 92

[Text] Tehran, Dec., 31, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani submitted a proposed draft of the country's national budget bill for the upcoming Iranian calendar year 1372 (March 21, 1993-March 20, 1994) to the Majles on December 15.

The budget bill is distinct from those of the previous years in many respects. Next year's budget bill is seemingly well-balanced and without deficit. It is entirely in terms of rials without dollar appropriations to government organs. It is also to the tune of rls [rials] 54,179.7 billion [bn] of which rls 25,425.8 billion is the general budget of the administration up by 104 per cent as compared to the previous year.

The budget bill has reduced to zero point the administration's need for borrowing from the national banking system to compensate for contingent deficits.

The budget deficit for the year 1370 was 14.6 per cent and for the current year 1371 (ending on next March 20) is estimated to be about nine per cent. A principal economic goal of the administration in relation to the national budget bill is to reduce deficit to zero point.

Public revenues and expenditures for the year 1372 are markedly different from their corresponding figures in this year's budget which is the result of the allocation of higher appropriations in terms of the national money of the country to government agencies in a bid to help them acquire their dollar needs, in floating rates, from the Central Bank of Iran. Rls 23,713 bn of the national budget bill for the year 1372 is to come from public revenues, and rls 1,712.8 bn is to come from special revenues.

The administration's general revenues in the year 1372 is 120.6 per cent higher than it has been this year. 23 per cent of the total general revenues of the government for the year 1372 is to be taxation revenues to the total of rls 5,419.7, and 67.2 per cent that is rls 15,484.1 bn is to be oil revenues.

In the next year's budget bill oil-related revenues is a higher proportion of the oil revenues in the national budget this year, and the share of taxation and other revenues is smaller in next year's budget.

The share of oil revenues in the current budget of the state is 52.9 per cent, taxation is 35.8 per cent, and other revenues 11.3 per cent.

Figures in next year's budget bill show that oil revenues will form a higher proportion of the total budget than it has been this year. A new parity rate between the rial and the dollar is also responsible for the increase, and it has been estimated that petro-dollars from oil will be higher next year.

Annual revenue from taxation next year is estimated to be around rls 5,419.7 bn, that is 50 per cent higher than it was estimated for the current year. In the Iranian calendar year 1367 the ratio of annual taxation to the gross national product was 2.3 per cent, in 1369 it was 4.8 per cent, in 1370 it was 6.7 per cent, and in 1372 is estimated to be about 8.2 per cent which shows the administration will be relying more on revenues from business and economic activities in the Iranian society than it did in the previous years. Experts say a prospering post-war economy in Iran has now prepared good grounds for better taxation by the adminsitration.

Oil revenues for the year 1372 are estimated to be about rls 15,484.1 bn that is three times as much as it has been this year. The next year's budget will rely more on oil revenues than the budget this year.

Paragraph eight of the note to Article 29 of the 1372-Budget Bill says oil revenues next year will be dlrs [dollars] 17,932.5 million. In the budget bill for the current year the total oil, gas, and oil-based revenues were estimated to be about dlrs 18,790m. Revenues for oil exports alone for the current year 1371 was estimated to be dlrs 16,551m.

Given Iran's oil production capacity of about four million BPD [barrels per day] by late March 1993, and an estimated daily export of three million barrels of crude the country will have to earn not less than about dlrs 16.5 per barrel between March 21, 1993 and March 20, 1994 which will be the Iranian calendar year 1372.

Public revenues from production and manufacturing and services areas in the upcoming Iranian year will have a growth of about 20.4 per cent, that is rls 4,680.7 bn as compared to the current year 1371.

The increase in public revenue of about 120 per cent for the upcoming year is expected to facilitate smooth continuation of current programs and implementation of projected development plans. The increase in taxation and in the revenue from the sale of foreign exchanges to the people at floating rates will prop up the structure of the national revenues next year.

Current expenditures next year are to be about rls 13,903.4 bn, that is up by about 85.3 per cent as compared to this year. Even though we should omit the changes as a result of new parity rates between the Iranian rial and foreign exchanges in the 1372-Budget Bill the current expenditures will increase by about 21 per cent. The Budget Bill says that the increase in that respect will be due to the appropriation of sufficient credits to government agencies so that they will be able to compensate their falling purchase power due to the new parity rate between the rial and the dollar.

The current expenditures go up as a result of credit allocations for payment of the debt of the public sector for the universal wage and salaries of the public sector employees, and also because of the government subsidies on basic staples and other.

The ratio of current expenditures to the total public sector expenditures in the year 1372 will be about 59 per cent. The same percentage in the current national budget is 67.

In the 1372-Budget Bill development expenditures are about rls 9,809.6 bn, that is 148 per cent more than it was estimated for the 1371-Budget Bill.

Development expenditures will be 41 per cent of the total expenditures of the public sector next year, the highest percentage for the past 27 years. This year it is 33 per cent of the total public sector expenditures.

In the allocation of credits for next year the predominant purpose has been to provide for investments in the physical facilities of public education, development of water and soil resources, and betterment of telecommunications infrastructures.

Development credits without respect to the changes inherent in new revised parity rate of the dollar will be 45 per cent higher than it has been this year.

Development budgets for the provinces next year will be 78 per cent more than it has been this year. The emphasis there is on public education facilities, health and infrastructural services such as road building, water and power supply in the less privileged areas of the country.

The 1372-national Budget Bill is designed also with a view to caring for the less privileged sectors of the Iranian society and credits for agencies responsible for offering those services have been increased from rls 704.4 bn this year to rls 1,342.2 bn for the year 1372, that is up by 90 per cent. The bulk of the credit will be offered in the form of pension and retirement salaries to pensioners and retired people.

In the Budget Bill for the year 1372 pensions and retirement pays to pensioners and retired people is about twice it has been this year, and it covers 1,850,000 households in Iran.

Despite that economists say the increase in the 1372-national budget of 104 per cent will be inflationary. Since the regulations of the first national development plan estimate that the growth of the index of prices of goods and services in the year 1372 will be 8.9 per cent the outlooks of the national Budget Bill 1372 will not make it possible to attain that goal.

The same economists argue that by the end of the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (September 23) the index of prices of goods and consumer services rose by 26 per cent. They add that a new parity rate of the dollar to go into effect as of March 21, 1993, as well as new items in expenditures will increase the aggregate of the current expenditures of the administration next year by 21 per cent and of the development expenditures by 45 per cent as compared to the current year which will be inflationary.

Despite the allocation of dollars 1,300m [million] for purchasing such basic consumer staples as wheat, rice, red meat, sugar, vegetable oil and cheese next year as a safeguard against rising prices of the same commodities, the general growth of prices next year will be inevitable.

The increase in the total budget of the administration next year will make it possible for many of the going economic projects to be completed or to continue as planned which will help growth of the gross national product, increase in economic capacities, and better operation of actual and potential resources in the country.

19 major development projects with a credit estimation of rls 1,080 bn are likely to become operational in Iran next year. Among them is a project for a petrochemical complex in Arak of Central Province, the seventh oil refinery of Arak, Saveh Dam, Pishin Dam, cement plants in Abadeh and Qa'en, wheat silos in Hamedan and Gonbad, a factory in Kerman for producing basic elements of detergents, as well as a tyre manufacturing factory in the same city.

Meanwhile new power plants in Iran next year will generate an additional 1,752 mw/h [megawatts/hour], of which 815 mw/h will be steam-generated power, 928 mw/h will come from new gas power plants, nine mw/h will be the capacity of new diesel and hydro-electric plants which will supply 1,200 villages throughout Iran.

Storage dams with a combined capacity of 530 million cubic meters, and minor water and irrigation projects for improving operation of present resources will offer an additional water resource of about 1,595 million cubic meters of water.

Meanwhile once the construction of the storage dam in Saven, central province, Baroun Dam in West Azerbaijan Province, and other storage dams in Band-Chaghakhor in Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari Province, and Nowhel in Mazendaran Province is completed the total capacity of storage dams in Iran will have improved by about 450 million cubic meters per hour.

Also operation of other projects in the area of industries, mines, oil and petrochemicals, housing, roads and transport, and post and telecommunications will greatly improve the national economic potentials in the country.

In sum the principal feature of the 1372-Budget Bill is the imposition of a uni-parity exchange rate of the dollar against the Iranian rial, and its deficit-free structure which, granted that revenues will be earned as planned, will help the administration rectify the structure of the national economy for a successful implementation of the upcoming second national development plan.

* Adeli on Military Budget Expenditure

93AS0342M London KEYHAN in Persian 17 Dec 92 p 4

[Text] Mohammad Hoseyn 'Adeli, chief of the Central Bank, who visited Germany last week, said that only 3.5 percent of the nation's budget is used to buy weapons. He called the reports on the Islamic Republic's increased military purchases "negative enemy propaganda." 'Adeli said: Iran has the smallest military budget among the nations of the area, because the other nations in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East spend 10 to 20 percent of their budgets to procure war materiel.

The chief of the Central Bank said that Iran is one of the "few nations" that had two-figure 12- and 10-percent growth last year and this year. He said: The budget deficit dropped from 12 percent to 2 percent and it will reach zero next year.

Concerning relations between Germany and the Islamic Republic, 'Adeli said that the Government of the Islamic Republic wants to solve the issues and problems in the bilateral relations, but he did not discuss the nature and kind of these issues and problems.

Kish Island Free Economic Zone Scheme Outlined

LD0201133693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 2 Jan 93

[Text] The managing director of the Kish Island Development Authority says with the unification of foreign currency exchange rates the free zones' activities will blossom.

Stating that so far 1.3 trillion rials have been invested in the free Kish Island, he added that the objective of the Kish authorities is to transform this free island into a storehouse of raw materials and to internationalize the island.

The Kish Development Authority managing director, in an interview with correspondents today, referred to a third independent airline company called "Kish Air", set up to expand the air communications of the free Kish Island and said that the setting up of direct air routes between Kish and various countries is part of the main Kish Development Authority projects. He said that at the moment 70 flights in all are made to Kish every week and we intend to set up soon direct flights between Kish and the Kazakhstan capital, Alma- Ata, and a Mashhad-Kish-Bahrain route beside the already existing Kish-Baku direct air routes.

He also spoke about a new plan by that authority for offering concessions to combatants and self-sacrificing devotees, and said that according to this plan for a prefabricated warehouse, with an area of 300 square meters—including electricity and water—10 million rials in financial assistance plus 20 million rials in banking facility will be put at the disposal of every group of five combatants volunteering for economic activity in the free Kish Island.

Concerning general facilities on Kish Island, he pointed out that merchants, professionals, and Kish Island inhabitants are exempt from income tax and customs duties for 20 years and they will be paid some subsidies toward their water and electricity bills, and expenses for transport and other public facilities.

Stating also that at the moment 10 foreign companies are active on the free Kish Island, he referred to a commercial-industrial agreement being concluded for setting up textile factories by German companies. On facilities for passengers and tourists who visit Kish Island, he said that we intend to offer special facilities to passengers who travel in a group to Kish. And foreign nationals visiting Kish will be issued with visas on the island itself.

* Kish Island Customs Becomes Operational

93AS0340J Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 23 Dec 92 p 10

[Interview with Mohammad Hoseyn Bagh-Enayat, the director general and supervisor of the Customs of the Provinces of Hormozgan, Yazd, and Kerman, by KEYHAN; place and date not given]

[Text] Kish Island. 25 Azar [16 December]. The Customs of Kish Island began operations on the anniversary of the birthday of her holiness Fatemeh Zahra and Women's Day.

With the opening of this customs office, the entry and exit of substandard goods and the waste of the time of passengers who return from Kish Island to other parts of the country will be prevented.

According to a report by KEYHAN from Kish Island, with the start of the operations of the customs of the island, from now on, with the customs procedures handled on Kish, passengers who make purchases on that island do not need to go through customs upon their return to their cities and national ports.

Mohammad Hoseyn Bagh-Enayat, the director general and supervisor of the Customs of the provinces of Hormozgan, Yazd, and Kerman, after the opening of the customs of Kish Island said in an interview with KEYHAN: Considering the large volume of imports and the exit of goods from Kish Island, this customs has been opened with the cooperation of the Developmental Organization of Kish in order to prevent the entry and exit of substandard goods and the waste of time of passengers. He added: In this customs, experienced people have been put to work. For this reason, from now on, after customs procedures on this island, passengers do not need to go through them in other domestic terminals.

In the opening ceremonies of the Kish customs, Hasan Saraylu was appointed and introduced as the director of the Kish customs.

* President Accused of Violating Constitution

93AS0340A Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 9 Dec 92 p 8

[Text] Thursday, 12 Azar [3 December], coincided with the 13th anniversary of the ratification of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the importance of which the grand leader of the Islamic revolution some time ago in a visit with the members of the Council of Guardians said: "The Constitution is, in fact, the crystallization and manifestation of the Islamic revolution and is one of the most progressive constitutions in the world and also secures the basic rights of human beings. Hence, violation of the Constitution means deviation from the proper revolutionary path of our society, and all the organizations of the country must consider it their duty to observe the Constitution."

Hence, the essence and nature of the Islamic revolution must be sought in the Constitution.

According to Article 13 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran: "After the leader, the president is the highest [ranking] official in the country and is in charge of the implementation of the Constitution and is the head of the executive branch, except in such cases that directly concern the leader. Also, based on Article 121 of the Constitution, a part of the presidential oath is: "I, as president, swear to Almighty God before the Koran and the Iranian nation to guard the official religion and the regime of the Islamic Republic and the Constitution and...."

Accordingly, the responsibility for any sort of deviation from the Constitution by ministers and high-ranking executive officials lies with the president, and he must be answerable before the law. Hence, by making use of the existing levers he must try to prevent deviation from the Constitution in any way possible.

On the other hand, the methods of the government, ministries, and some of the ministers and officials are such that in one way or another they are a violation of and deviation from the Constitution and according to the grand leader of the Islamic revolution are considered a "violation of the proper movement of the revolutionary society." Undoubtedly, his emphasis in this area that "all the organizations of the country must consider it their duty to observe the Constitution" is not addressed to persons in an unofficial capacity, and he is addressing primarily the high ranking directors and government officials.

The question is whether or not the government has violated Articles 30, 44, 49, and 81 of the Constitution.

Based on Article 30 of the Constitution, "the government is responsible to provide the means for education for the whole nation through high school and expand the means for higher education up to the level of self-sufficiency of the country free of charge." At the present, not only is no attention paid to this article of the Constitution, but also the Ministry of Education, by encouraging people to purchase government schools, intends to place its duties on others, which is completely contrary to this article. Besides, there are whispers here and there about merging the two Ministries of Education and Culture and Higher Education. It seems the whispers are mostly for another purpose, which is the privatization of universities, as has been stated by some of the officials.

Of the two ministers of education and culture and higher education, the first supports the plan to privatize the educational institutions and establishments and the second one opposes it.

Some time ago, the president of Amir Kabir University said that the "Plan and Budget Organization has suggested that in the second Five-Year Plan the two above-mentioned ministries be combined." He has warned in this regard that "there are contradictions in this proposal. For example, it has been stated that since the universities have become independent, there is no need for the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education. But, since the Majles must be informed about the situation of the universities, it is suggested that it be merged with the Ministry of Education. If independence means not needing a ministry, why should the universities be attached to [the Ministry of] Education, and if there is need for supervision, the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education, considering its experience and present status, is active."

According to Dr. Salimi, the president of Amir Kabir Industrial University: Since the volume of education in ratio to the universities in the country is 36 to 1, and also 18 million students and employees of this ministry cannot be compared to 700,000 students, professors, and employees in the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education, certainly when the budget is distributed and allocated, the largest share will go to education, and quality will be sacrificed for quantity.

Here we must add, if these two ministries merge, and if the government does what it has done in the Ministry of Education and is practically going in the direction of putting its duties on the shoulders of others, what will be the fate of the universities and the whole of higher education?

Another point is the government's failure to observe Article 44 of the Constitution. According to this article: "The government sector includes all large industries; parent industries; foreign trade; large mines; banking; insurance; providing energy; the dams and large water networks; radio and television; post, telegraph and telephone; airlines; shipping roads and railroads; and the like, which are at the disposal of the government as public property." Of course, in trying to achieve its economic goals, creating economic modifications, and pursuing the trend of development and expansion and other concepts that are stated by high-ranking government directors and officials, with the exception of the dams and large water networks (which have no buyers) and post, telegraph and telephone (which is not profitable to the private sector), the government has cited projects and plans to transfer other above-mentioned areas in the text of Article 44 of the Constitution to the private sector.

And this is not the end of it. Rather, so far the operation of the government in the area of implementing Article 49 of the Constitution is engulfed in ambiguity and silence, and it is quite possible that, since the government essentially has not presented a report to the Majles and the nation in this regard, it has taken no step in this direction.

According to Article 49 of the Constitution: "The government is responsible to take the wealth gained by usury, usurpation, bribery, embezzlement, theft, gambling, the misuse of religious endowments, the misuse of government contracts and transactions, the sale of barren lands, the establishment of places of corruption, and other illegitimate situations and return it to its rightful owner, and if he is not known, to give it to the treasury. This ruling must be carried out by the government through investigating and religiously proving the case."

The question is, except in cases regarding the property of large capitalists and fugitives affiliated with the past regim,e which were confiscated early in the revolution, can other cases be mentioned that have been subject to this article of the Constitution? In the area of "other illegitimate cases" an example of which can be misuse and disruption in the market of Muslims, what has the government done? Is it not true that there are a great many capitalists who have gained billions of tomans overnight through illegal and illegitimate means in this country and are now active freely in the society?

The government's violation of the Constitution does not end here. Even on the basis of laws ratified in the previous tyrannical regime, actual and legal foreign establishments and individuals had the right to invest in Iran only if their share would not exceed 49 percent, and the rest of the shares had to belong to actual and legal investors who had Iranian citizenship.

Also, according to Article 81 of the Constitution, "giving concessions to establish companies and establishments in trade, industrial, agricultural, mining and services to foreigners is absolutely prohibited."

This means that foreigners have never had nor do they have the right to own more than 49 percent of the shares of an economic establishment, even though we frequently hear government officials say that foreign investors have no restrictions on investments in Iran.

These and many other cases of this kind raise the question: Who is the guardian of the Constitution, and in accordance with what law and regulations has the government given itself the right to be an unsuitable model of violation of the Constitution, and in order to achieve its economic plans and goals consider violation of the constitution permissible? If the government itself is the first violator of the Constitution, then what can we expect of others? Who is responsible to investigate these violations? This is the question that KEYHAN-E HAVA'I has raised before.

* Work Conditions for Foreigners More Difficult

93AS0342O London KEYHAN in Persian 17 Dec 92 p 4

[Text] It was announced in Tehran: All foreigners intending to work in Iran must obtain a work permit before going to Iran. Mostafa Musavi, the Ministry of Labor's general manager of the affairs of foreign workers, said: Henceforth work permits for those who are to work in Iran will be issued before they cross Iran's borders. He added: Those who hire foreign nationals without work permits will be imprisoned for 91 to 180 days. Ministry of Labor officials said: Special officials in this ministry are supervising private and government companies on a continuous basis to prevent the hiring of foreigners without work permits. They said: In inspections of foreign companies it became clear that Japanese companies broke the law in this regard more than the other foreign organizations in Iran. The Ministry of Labor officials noted: A great many of those who serve enter Iran initially on a tourist visa. Then they extend it and then they leave the country and enter again in order each time to stay for the allowed time. These officials said: A great many foreign workers in Iran remained there and worked illegally after the expiration of the authorized period of residence. Article 128 of the Iran Labor Law says: Without obtaining permission from the Ministry of Labor no one has the right to hire a foreign worker. Another condition for the hiring of foreigners is that in that field and professional specialty it must be clear that there are no qualified Iranian applicants and in that case, during his period of employment in Iran the foreigner must train Iranian workers so that in the future they will be able to provide that same service to their country.

* Montazeri Cancels Classes in Protest

93AS0342A London KEYHAN in Persian 17 Dec 92 pp 1, 11

[Text] The cancellation of classes is a common protest measure at the seminaries. This is not the first time that Ayatollah Montazeri has canceled his class in protest of the way the country is managed in the Islamic Republic. Apparently, however, this time the protest was more vigorous and extensive than in the previous instances, because the seminaries, especially the Qom and Mashhad seminaries, two of the most important centers of religious education, are quite restless. The main reason is that the government has set forth a plan to bring the seminaries, which have heretofore been independent, under its control. The people in the government reason that independence for the seminaries had meaning only when the government was not Islamic, and now that the government has become Islamic, all its parts must be controlled from one unified center.

'Ali Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic Republic, in a letter to the Society of Qom Seminary Teachers dated 24 Aban 1371 [15 November 1992], said among other things that "governmental theology is one of the basic responsibilities of the seminaries." Elsewhere in this letter he said: "The manager of a seminary must be able to make choices, take initiatives, act quickly and speak concisely...and this is where there must be one will and one person."

Opposition to "governmentalizing theology" revolves around two crucial points: The first is that the main seminary leaders, from the sources of emulations to some of those with independent discretion in matters of religious jurisprudence, do not want to give up their independence to the government, no matter what kind of government it may be. The second is that they do not consider 'Ali Khamene'i to have high enough standing in the hierarchy of theological knowledge to be able to issue such an order.

It is worth noting that the effort to establish government control over the seminaries goes back to Khomeini's time. This effort began when the government of Mir Hoseyn Musavi tried to free the government's policies from the influence of the Council of Guardians, most of whose members were representatives of Qom Seminary, and in this regard there was a need for a clear fatwa from Khomeini.

For this reason on 16 Azar 1366 [7 Dec 1987) Abol-Qasem Sarhadizadeh (the minister of labor at that time, who is working today also on keeping and making the economy a government economy), in a "request for a fatwa," asked Khomeini if the government could declare "exigency conditions." What he was asking was, could the government do things which are not only unsupported by traditional Islamic theology, but are even in conflict with the principles of this theology at times? Khomeini's answer was short and clear: "The government can declare 'exigency conditions'...in any case."

After this fatwa, the minister of labor and social affairs said in an interview that it will no longer be possible for someone to cite theological issues to question the religious legitimacy of what the government does, and "henceforth, whenever the government wants to implement a law, with this fatwa from the great Imam, it can implement it." As it happened, someone who "questioned" the "religious legitimacy" of what the government was doing is the same person who was president of the republic in those days and has now been placed in Khomeini's position as leader. On 11 Dey 1366 [1 Jan 1988], 'Ali Khamene'i, president of the republic at that time, gave a Friday prayer sermon at Tehran University in which he discussed the minister of labor's interpretation of the fatwa and Khomeini's fatwa. He said: "In His Holiness the Imam's answer there is a clear reference that measures taken by the Islamic government are not to be taken as disruptions of the accepted Islamic laws and commands." Khamene'i discussed the minister of labor's remarks, and added: "Some people want to infer from the Imam's fatwa, or abuse it in such a way, to suggest that the Imam is saying: The government can decree conditions under which you can use these services (government services) to allow you to do things that are in violation of the accepted Islamic laws and commands. The Imam says: No, these are rumors being spread...by people with an axe to grind."

The answer Khomeini gave to these remarks by Khamene'i left no room for misunderstanding that the founder of the Islamic Republic confirmed the positions of the same people whom Khamene'i had called "ax grinders and rumormongers." In a letter to Khamene'i dated 16 Dey 1366 [6 Jan 1988], he wrote: "It appears from your remarks at the Friday prayer service that you do not consider correct the government by the absolute vice-regency of the chief jurisconsult, which was assigned to the most noble prophet by God and is one of the most important divine commands, and takes precedence over all the secondary divine commands. To interpret what I said to mean that government has discretion in the framework of divine commands is completely contrary to what I said."

Khomeini added: "The government may destroy a mosque that is blocking the road.... When necessary the government may close a mosque.... The government may unilaterally cancel its religiously lawful treaties.... The government may...prevent any activity, whether devotional or nondevotional, when it is against the interest of Islam. What has been said heretofore or may be said arises from the failure to understand the absolute divine vice-regency."

After this harsh and clear answer from Khomeini, Khamene'i was silent. Only one voice against Khomeini's remarks was reflected in the newspapers at that time, and that was the voice of this same Hoseyn'ali

Montazeri (who at that time was still Khomeini's successor). He said that under no circumstances does the Islamic government have the right unilaterally to cancel its treaties, even if they were made with infidels.

Today Khamene'i has reversed his positions of several years ago, and of course he has repeated those same words by Khomeini that he used to consider in violation of the primary commands of Islam in another speech. While the great sources of emulation are silent, or at least make no public reaction, again it is Montazeri who closes his classes in protest.

Concerning the closure of Ayatollah Montazeri's classes, Dr. 'Abbas Mohajerani, a prominent clergyman, said: Two acts have long held special significance in Iran's seminaries. One is not going to the mosque for prayer, the other is closing classes. In the political history of Iran, these two acts by clergymen have always been associated with protest. It was probably in this same connection that Ayatollah Montazeri closed his class last week.

Dr. Mohajerani said: On page 17, Vol. 2 of the book *The Political History of Iran*, it says that during the shah's reforms in the year 1341 [21 March 1962-20 March 1963], the clergy suddenly stopped going to the mosques and the pulpits in protest.

* Manager of GARDUN Magazine Acquitted

93AS0340I Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian 23 Dec 92 p 3

[Text] Tehran. IRNA. 25 Azar [16 December]. The press jury in the court trying 'Abbas Ma'rufi, the manager of GARDUN magazine, who was arrested some time ago following the publication of an insulting sketch and the collective protest of the people, after hearing the bill of indictment and the defense of the accused and his attorney, acquitted the accused.

The ruling of the jury states: The manager of GARDUN magazine has been found not guilty, and the content of the magazine was not legally a crime.

The text of the ruling of the jury is as follows:

In the name of God the compassionate and the merciful.

On 17/9/71 [8 December 1992], the session to examine accusations against Mr. 'Abbas Ma'rufi, the owner and manager of GARDUN magazine, was held in the First Penal Court No. 135 of Tehran in the presence of the jury (signatories below).

After the reading of the bill of indictment and hearing the defense of the accused and his attorney, the honorable president of the court announced the conclusion of the investigation.

The jury, after examining the items stated in the bill of indictment and accompanying published items in various issues of GARDUN magazine, considering the contents of the file and the defense of the accused and his attorney before the court, and also with consideration for the statements of the accused regarding his belief in the Islamic revolution, the Constitution, and the regime of the Islamic Republic and his admission of his likely mistakes in his press activities, and also considering that the printed sketch on the cover of the magazine (Issues 15 and 16) was interpreted variously from different perspectives [as published].

Although the content of the above-mentioned issues of GARDUN magazine as stated in the bill of indictment in some cases is not appropriate to the goals of the Islamic revolution, they are not legally criminal and cannot conform to the legal items stated in the bill of indictment. Hence, the jury does not consider the accused a criminal.

Mohaqqeq-Damad, Mohammad Taqi Fazel-Meybodi, Jalal Rafi', Mohammad Javad Sahebi, Ahmad Purnejati, Eftekhar Jahromi, and 'Ata'ollah Mohajerani.

* Former Minister Amini Dies of Heart Failure

93AS0342F London KEYHAN in Persian 17 Dec 92 p 2

[Text] 'Ali Amini was born in Tehran in Shahrivar of the solar year 1384 [23 Sepember-22 October 1905]. He completed primary school at the Rashidieh school and secondary school at the Dar ol-Fonun school.

In the year 1925 he went to France. After living a year in Grenoble, he went to Paris and took a doctorate in economics at the Sorbonne. After his return to Iran in 1934, at first he wanted to be a trial lawyer or a university professor, but due to persuasion by Davar, the founder of the new Ministry of Justice in Iran, he was hired by the Ministry of Justice, and when Davar became minister of finance, he took Amini with him to that ministry.

Amini became chief of the office of Qovam ol-Soltaneh, a Majles deputy and chief of the Budget Commission. In 1950 he became minister of economics on 'Ali Mansur's cabinet, and he also kept this position in Dr Mossadeq's cabinet.

He accepted the job of minister of finance in the cabinet of General Fazlollah Zahedi, and he signed the controversial oil treaty with the consortium. Then in the cabinet of Hoseyn 'Ala he was minister of finance and then minister of justice.

In the years 1956 and 1958 he was Iran's ambassador to the United States, and in 1961 and 1962 he was prime minister of Iran and began the land reforms, which were the origin of important changes in Iran.

After stepping down as prime minister, he spent a long time outside of government activity until, on the eve of the Islamic revolution, he was appointed regularly to consulting jobs by the late shah. After the Islamic revolution Amini went to London and here, with the cooperation of several of his friends and close political associates, he founded the Iran Salvation Front.

The late Amini had been inactive politically for years, and he more or less remained at home during the last three years.

KEYHAN offers condolences on the passing of Dr. 'Ali Amini to his survivors, especially Iraj Amini, this family's only surviving child.

Pakistan

Sharif Urges UN To Play Kuwait-Like Role in Kashmir

BK0501144093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, has said Pakistan will continue to extend moral, political, and diplomatic support to Kashmiri brethren. Inaugurating the three-day Shah Hamadan international conference in (Doorban) today, he said Kashmir will, inshallah [God willing], be free soon. Indian repression and tyranny cannot suppress the heroic struggle waged by the Kashmiris for their just right. The Kashmiris are being subjected to unprecedented torture and oppression, but their struggle is gaining momentum despite Indian atrocities. The prime minister urged the United Nations to implement its resolutions on Kashmir as it did in the case of Kuwait. The world body should exert pressure on India for implementation of these resolutions. He said the whole world should support the Kashmiris in their just struggle which is in accordance with UN resolutions.

Paying tribute to Shah Hamadan, the prime minister said the Economic Cooperation Organization is the realization of the dream of the great saint. A number of development projects are being launched by this organization which binds together Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, and the Central Asian states. The member-countries are being linked by road. This will provide trade facilities to Central Asian states via Pakistan and days are not far off when the whole area will achieve a status like the European Economic Community. The prime minister also paid rich tributes to Shah Hamadan for spreading Islam in this region and Kashmir. He said it was heartening that the 700th birth anniversary of Shah Hamadan will be celebrated during the coming hegira year. The Government of Pakistan will play its role in celebrating this occasion in a befitting manner.

Country To Sign Convention Banning Chemical Arms 13 Jan

BK0601115493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] Pakistan will sign the convention completely banning and prohibiting production, possessing, and using chemical weapons in Paris on the 13th of this month. A spokesman of foreign office stated in Islamabad today that the signing of the convention by Pakistan is in line with its policy [word indistinct] well over the last two decades to oppose production, possession, and use of chemical weapons by any country.

Offices of Afghan Factions Banned From Territory

BK0501162293 Hong Kong AFP in English 1255 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, Jan 5 (AFP)—Pakistan on Tuesday told all Afghan factions to close their offices and ordered unregistered humanitarian groups run by foreigners for Afghan refugees to wind up by the end of the month.

"The federal government has decided to close offices of all Afghan organizations in the north west Frontier province and its tribal areas by January 31," the provincial government said in a statement.

Unregistered non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in welfare work for Afghan refugees have been ordered to end their activities by the same date, the statement said.

All foreign workers associated with the unregistered NGOs have been asked to leave the country before the deadline.

In formal notices to all Afghan groups, the government also directed them to close their printing presses and warned that the printing of any material would be considered an "illegal act and dealt with sternly under the law."

The statement said the government had also warned Pakistani printing houses not to publish any literature for Afghan factions, threatening "severe penalties for any violations."

According to official sources more than 50 NGOs have been operating in the province and the tribal belt bordering Afghanistan.

In addition to about a dozen Afghan political factions, a number of subsidiary groups also maintain offices in the region, which served as a base and sanctuary for the Afghan resistance.

The 14-year anti-communist jihad, or holy war, backed by Western and Muslim countries, especially affluent Arab states, forced more than three million Afghans to flee to Pakistan.

The war ended in April last year when the mujahedeen took control of Kabul but inter-factional fighting in the capital has continued.

First 50 Families To Return From Bangladesh Early Jan

BK3112161492 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 31 Dec 92

[Text] The government has made necessary arrangements for the repatriation of the first group of nearly 50 families of Pakistanis stranded in Bangladesh. A Foreign Office statement in Islamabad today said that the Pakistani High Commission in Dhaka has been issued directives and arrangements have been made for the transportation of the Pakistanis to their homeland by air and their rehabilitation in Punjab. These families are expected to arrive in Lahore early next month. Repatriation of the remaining Pakistanis from Bangladesh will depend on the completion of residential facilities and provision of funds for their transportation and rehabilitation.

Further Report

BK0101085293 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 1 Jan 93

[Text] Repatriation of stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh will now commence from 10th of this month. The decision was taken at a high-level meeting held in Lahore yesterday under the chairmanship of the Punjab chief minister, Mr. Ghulam Haider Wyne. At the meeting, arrangements were finalized for the rehabilitation of Pakistanis and a committee headed by the federal minister of state for housing, Mr. Javed Hashmi, will finalize the details.

British Home Secretary Begins 3-Day Visit

BK0601021893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] British Home Secretary Kenneth Clarke arrived in Lahore from New Delhi last night on a three-day visit to Pakistan. Talking to newsmen at Lahore Airport, Kenneth Clarke said his country enjoys friendly relations with both Pakistan and India and we desire that the two neighbors of South Asia should settle their problems, including Kashmir.

German Environment Minister Meets Nawaz Sharif

BK0501145093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 5 Jan 93

[Text] The German federal minister for environment, Dr. Klaus Toepfer, called on the prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, in Islamabad today. The prime minister appreciated the effective role played by Germany for environment-related issues. He said Pakistan fully shares the concerns of the world community over deteriorating atmospheric condition. He said Pakistan will take all necessary steps to fight the increasing menace of pollution. The German minister said coordinated efforts are required by the world community to combine the development process with the environment.

Greek Minister Confers With Foreign Secretary General

BK0201150093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 2 Jan 93

[Text] The deputy foreign minister of Greece, Mr. Viron Polidhoras, called on the secretary general of foreign affairs, Mr. M. Akram Zaki, in Islamabad today. The Greek minister is visiting Pakistan as special envoy of the Greek prime minister to coordinate views on issues likely to come up for discussion during the deliberations of the UN Security Council. Pakistan became the nonpermanent member of the 15-nation power center of the world body yesterday, replacing India for a two-year term. Spain, New Zealand, Brazil, and Djibouti also became nonpermanent members of the Security Council which has the prime responsibility of maintenance of peace and stability in the world.

President Meets Kazakhstan Delegation

BK0601025893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] The president has called for special attention to establish air, rail, and road links among members states of the Economic Cooperation Organization. Talking to (Nemat Jan Kavatavich), the leader of visiting Kazakhstan delegation, in Islamabad yesterday, Ghulam Ishaq Khan said this is imperative to revive ancient cultural and trade links among regional countries. The president said concrete steps will have to be taken to link up the member states with a view to making the Economic Cooperation Organization a tangible economic block.

The Kazakhstan delegation leader told the president that his country has already started working to establish these links. He also exchanged views with the president on matters relating on expanding existing bilateral relations in various sectors.

The Kazakhstan delegation members Minister of State for Communications Mohammad Azam Khan Hoti told the delegation that Pakistan is prepared to establish joint ventures with Kazakhstan in the fields of telecommunications and shipping.

State Bank Calls Fiscal Deficit Central Problem

BK0201013293 Karachi DAWN in English 31 Dec 92 p 1, 13

[Text] Karachi, Dec 30: While acknowledging the acceleration in the rate of economic growth, reduction in the rate of inflation and a marked improvement in the country's foreign exchange reserves, as the "most significant achievements" during 1991-1992, the Annual Report of the State Bank of Pakistan [SBP], released on

Wednesday, has identified the weak spots in public finance management with a candid observation: "A high level of fiscal deficit continues to be the centrol concern for the managers of the Pakistan economy."

The SBP Annual Report for 1991-92 warns the Government in clear words: "Failure to reduce fiscal deficit in the years ahead to a more manageable level, could, through various linkages, put further pressure on the balance of payments, price expectation as well as on exchange rate, with a bearing on capital formation and financial stability."

SBP has also taken note of the fact that during each of the past two years, more than 70 percent of credit expansion of unusually large magnitude was accounted for by budgetary support. This situation, it says, is at variance with the expectations of an increasingly larger role of the private sector in the economic development.

SBP has suggested the Government raise the total revenue as a percentage of the GDP to 20 percent as an "immediate target" with a medium term target of 22 percent. Revenue has remained stagnated around 18 percent for quite a few years.

In this regard, SBP has again underscored the need for reform to broaden the tax base, improvements in collection, enhancing the elasticity of tax structure, reduction of revenue dependence on foreign trade and, above all, "containing the growth of current expenditure."

During 1991-92, the excess of current expenditure over total revenue was Rs [rupees] 9.8 billion, reduced from Rs 31.8 billion a year earlier, which the report has described as a "healthy development."

Another area of concern for SBP is the low level of savings which suffered a marginal decline as percentage of the GNP.

"A failure to improve the level of national savings will put pressure on balance of payments, eventually causing a deterioration in the foreign debt profile", the SBP report warns.

Population SBP has described a 3.1 percent annual increase in population a "very serious problem both in the short and the long run." The report says: "Various problems like widespread unemployment, segmentation of the society in groups, pressures on social and physical infrastructure and finally the problem of law and order are closely linked to population pressures on the economy. SBP appreciated the interest being taken by the Government, as is evident in several measures taken to address the problem.

"It is imperitive that regardless of any changes in economic strategy or economic priorities, reduction in the rate of population growth should remain a national priority," SBP stresses.

UNEMPLOYMENT: Commending the GDP growth rate of 6.4 percent in 1991-92 as compared to 5.6 percent in 1990-91, SBP has, however, observed that despite this impressive growth rate, for the past several years, "s proportionate dent on unemployment" has not been made due to a high rate of increase in labour force.

The problem of disguised unemployment is also acute because of rapid population growth. According to the report, the recently announced fair employment programme and reshaped rural industrialisation "may address the employment issue in selected segments of the population." The problem remains "acute" in the case of unorganised laobur and needs a broad policy change it stresses.

PRICES: The SBP report has appreciated the easing of price situation in 1991-92 which has somewhat accentuated [as published] in 1990-91. It points out that the average of 12 months consumer price index increased at a slower rate of 9.6 percent in 1991-92 as compared to an increase of 12.7 percent in 1990-91.

"Viewed in the backdrop of world economic recession and compared to non-fuel exporting countries, both the growth and price performance appeared to be impressive", the report observes.

FOREX RESERVES: Another significant achievement during 1991-92 has been a marked increase in the foreign exchange reserves to 1,011.5 million dollars from 852.9 million dollars at the end of June, 1991.

GDP GROWTH: The 6.4 percent growth rate in GDP during 1991-92 is attributable to 6.8 percent growth in the commodity producing sectors and 5.9 percent growth in the services sector.

A significant feature has been a marginal decline in the import of consumer goods during 1991-92 despite a sharp rise in aggregate consumption the great bulk of which was met from domestic production.

Sectorwise, the growth in agriculture was 6.4 percent attributed exclusively to 33.6 percent increase in the production of cotton, while wheat crop showed a marginal increase, production of most minor crops either declined or remained unchanged, compared to the production levels in 1990-91.

The manufacturing sector grew at 7.7 percent compared with 6.3 percent a year earlier. The large scale manufacturing sector showed a growth rate of 7.4 percent, compared with 5.5 percent a year earlier, mainly because of an upsurge in investment in recent years.

CURRENT DEFICIT: The deficit on current account during 1991-92 stood at 2.152 billion dollars, which is 5 percent of the GNP, as against 1,567 billion dollars deficit , which was 3.7 percent of the GNP in 1990-91. While attributing the deterioration in the current account deficit to a decline in unrequited transfers, (home remittances being switched over to foreign currency accounts), the SBP report has observed that this development is not just sustainable.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT: Deficit on current account was however, fully matched by the doubling of net inflow of long-term capital to 2.6 billion dollars in 1991-1992 from 1.03 billion dollars in 1990-91. This net inflow included the foreign private investment which increased by more than 100 percent to 562 million dollars. It is non-debt creating source of financing.

Largely as a result of the rise in the level of foreign currency accounts, the reserves position, which had earlier remained under pressure, improved substantially. The reserves stood at 1.76 billion dollars at the end of June 1992 as against 1.39 billion dollars in 1991.

FOREIGN TRADE: Significant feature of 1991-92 foreign trade were 12.1 percent increase in exports to 6.9 billion dollars despite a major slump in the international markets. Imports rose by 21.3 percent to a record level of 9.3 billion dollars but "imports against cash remained unchanged."

MONETARY EXPANSION: As against the original target of 12.1 percent monetary expansion amounting to Rs 45.4 billion the actual expansion was 77.04 billion, which came to 20.6 percent growth. The Government's borrowing from the banking system for budgetary support amounted to Rs 72.5 billion, which included a replacement of non- bank borrowing with bank borrowing of Rs 30 billion. Total credit to the private sector increased from Rs 25.1 billion to Rs 30.2 billion.

According to the SBP report, the abolition of credit ceiling system from 1992-93, besides other financial reforms, has provided a boost to deposit mobilisation efforts of the banks, leading to a reversal in the disintermediation process of the banking system.

The report points out that the capital market remained active during 1992-92 and responded positively to the various economic reform measures, particularly liberalisation of the foreign exchange sector.

The stock market exhibited bullish sentiment and SBP General Index of Share Prices increased from 393.47 at the end of June 1991 to 760.24 by the end of June 1992, denoting a record growth of 93.2 percent.

Delhi Reports Arrest of Railway Minister Billour

BK0601090493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Text] In Pakistan, the federal railway minister, Mr. Ghulam Ahmad Billour, has been arrested by the Peshawar police in a murder case involving a worker of the opposition Pakistan People's Party. Mr. Billour was later released on bail.

Sri Lanka

Guerillas Condemn 'Brutal Massacre' of Civilians

BK0601064693 Hong Kong AFP in English 0626 GMT 6 Jan 93

[By Anosh Ahamath]

[Text] Colombo, Jan 6 (AFP)—Tamil Tiger guerrillas Wednesday [6 January] said the reported killing of 14 civilian boat passengers last weekend by Sri Lanka's navy was a setback to a peaceful settlement to Sri Lanka's long-drawn ethnic conflict.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in a statement said they "vehemently" condemned the "brutal massacre of innocent boat passengers perpetrated by the Sri Lankan navy" in the northern Jaffna lagoon on Saturday.

So far there has been no official denial of the incident and the military has confirmed attacking several boats in the lagoon which has been declared a prohibited zone in a bid to prevent LTTE boat traffic.

A military spokesman here said the navy exchanged fire with another flotilla of "terrorist boats" overnight Tuesday but there were no casualties among sailors.

"Terrorists losses are believed to be high," the spokesman said.

Civilians wanting to go between the LTTE-held Jaffna peninsula and the mainland have been victims of both the security forces and the guerrillas who have imposed travel restrictions.

The military has opened a land route which the Tigers have said should not be used while the ferry across the Jaffna lagoon has been made illegal by the navy which has declared the waterway a no-go zone.

The LTTE said they had repeatedly urged the Colombo government "to stop repressive acts on the civilian population in order to create conducive conditions for talks.

"This kind of gory acts of the government forces... will only help to shut the door for peace which is kept open by the LTTE," the LTTE statement, received here from the group's London office, said.

"This heinous act of state terrorism on the innocent Tamil civilians will be detrimental to the peaceful settlement of the Tamil problem," the LTTE statement said.

It followed an appeal by two Tamil legislators, Kandiah Premachandra and Kandiah Navaratnam, for a commission to be set up to investigate the civilians' deaths.

The two MPs in a telegram to President Ranasinghe Premadasa said that they were "deeply disturbed and anguished" over the navy attack which was carried out in spite of evidence that the craft were civilian passenger boats.

"Eye-witness accounts clearly show that the navy gunboat fired on the vessel carrying civilians being fully aware that they were non- combatant civilians," the two Tamil lawmakers said.

The LTTE are leading a campaign to establish an independent homeland in the northeast for Sri Lanka's two million minority Tamils who are concentrated in the region. Thousands, many of them civilians, have died in the war.

In the latest incident in the fighting, a military spokesman said Wednesday that Tamil guerrillas attacked an army observation post outside the main military base in northern Sri Lanka and killed two soldiers.

The position was inside an area held by the LTTE when it came under attack overnight Tuesday, the spokesman said.

"We have our men even ahead of our Forward Defence Lines at the Palaly base. There was a confrontation and we lost two. Terrorist casualties are not known," the spokesman said.

Navy Increases Operations in Jaffna Lagoon

BK0601113193 Hong Kong AFP in English 1038 GMT 6 Jan 93

[Report by Anosh Ahamath]

[Excerpts] Colombo, Jan 6 (AFP)—The Sri Lankan Navy Wednesday [6 January] stepped up operations in a restricted waterway in the north of the island as Tamil guerrillas warned that Navy attacks on civilian boat passengers would impede peace efforts, officials said.

A military spokesman here said Navy craft intensified their surveillance of the Jaffna Lagoon after a fierce battle overnight Tuesday between the Navy and guerrillas of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

"LTTE guerrillas in more than 40 fibreglass dinghies attacked two of our Inshore Patrol Craft operating in the Jaffna Lagoon with rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns," the spokesman said.

Both Navy craft retaliated and beat off the flotilla of rebel boats "presumably causing heavy casualties and damages," the spokesman said, adding that the sailors had not suffered any casualties.

Tuesday's clash in the lagoon came three days after the Navy reportedly killed 14 civilian boat passengers on the Jaffna Lagoon. So far there has been no official denial of the killings.

A spokesman for the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), a small rival of the LTTE, said they had received reports that several more civilian passengers were missing after the Navy attack but they could not confirm this. [passage omitted]

Tamil leaders have urged President Ranasinghe Premadasa to set up a commission to investigate the civilian deaths. They also discussed the incident with senior military officials Wednesday.

The military spokesman said that the ban on boat traffic in the lagoon would not be lifted despite appeals by Tamil lawmakers to suspend naval operations to allow thousands of stranded civilians to reach the peninsula.

"There is no plan right now to lift the ban. As long as it stays, the Navy will carry out strict patrolling of the lagoon," the spokesman said, adding that the LTTE had intensified attacks on Navy boats in the area from December.

The spokesman said LTTE guerrillas had also killed two soldiers near an Army base in the Jaffna peninsula, while security forces shot dead six Tigers in separate incidents in the east. [passage omitted]

Premadasa Praises Fast Development of Country

BK0101120693 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 1 Jan 93

[Text] Sri Lanka has now won the admiration of the world community as the fastest developing country in South Asia. President Ranasinghe Premadasa said this in [word indistinct] the policies pursued by the government have succeeded in attracting an ever increasing amount of foreign capital and a stream of foreign investors to the country. The situation came about as the result of the policies implemented by the government over the past four years. The president was confident that the New Year will bring with it more good fortune. The president was speaking at the opening of yet another garment factory in (Sinkaragale) yesterday. The obstacles placed in the path of the government are not personal obstacles for him or for the government. They are a great crime against the entire people of the country. Commenting on the war in the northeast, the president said that this unwanted war claimed an annual expenditure of 23 billion rupees. Members of the armed forces and the police are sacrificing their lives to safeguard the unity of the country. The president said that this problem should be resolved to safeguard the unity and sovereignty of the nation. In this connection, he commended the efforts by the parliamentary select committee. The solution to this conflict will release for development the 23 billion rupees spent on the current war efforts. The president noted that if this money could be saved, poverty could be eliminated from the country within a six month period.

Rise in Local, Foreign Investments Reported

BK0201115093 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 2 Jan 93

[Text] Local and foreign investments approved by the Board of Investment [BOI] of Sri Lanka hits the 36,625 million rupees mark in 1992, an increase of more than 20,000 million rupees over the 1991 figure of 16,476 million rupees. According to the director general of the Board of Investment, Lakshman R. Watuwale, the BOI approved a total of 291 projects in 1992, while only 111 projects were given approval in 1991. He said the Katunayake, Weeragame, and Koggala free trade zones employed more than 1,400 persons in various export-oriented ventures. But, the most remarkable achievement for BOI this year was the granting of 100,000 jobs with the establishment of 200 garment factories islandwide.